■ ENTERTAINMENT / A2-1

Robbie Williams is Guinness World Records holder

■ BUSINESS / B1

Banks' bad loans amount to P170.6B

■ NEWS / A5

Filipinos in denial over bird flu, says health official

■ WORLD / A8

White House leaning toward Iraq pullout

Garcillano spent his time reading, writing memoirs

By Michael Lim Ubac

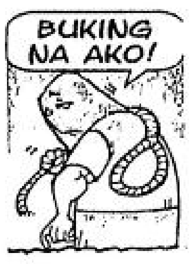
ALL THE WHILE THAT THE NATION WAS wondering where he had gone, Virgilio Garcillano was, by his account, somewhere in the South, writing his memoirs and reading a book.

The book which the widely maligned for-

GARCILLANO/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Singapore hangman axed after his identity blown


BUKING NA AKO!

SINGAPORE—SINGAPORE has sacked its long-serving hangman, less than a week before the scheduled execution of an Australian drug smuggler, after his identity and picture was exposed by media.

"They called me a few days

S'PORE/ A22

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph
Monday, November 28, 2005 ★★ 7 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 353 P18
website: www.inq7.net

I never left RP, says Garci

Denies talk with GMA to rig 2004 poll results

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE MAN WHOSE ALLEGED phone conversations with President Macapagal-Arroyo almost brought down her administration and whose disappearance sparked what was said to be a global manhunt never left the country after all—at least, that is what he now says.

In an exclusive interview with this reporter, who was blindfolded before he was brought to the clandestine meeting near Cotabato City, former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano said his widely reported "great escape" was a "hoax."

"I was here all this time," Garcillano said in the first interview he gave a newspaper since his wife Grace last week broke the news of her husband's presence in the south.

"It's safer here than abroad," he quipped, contradicting an official diplomatic report issued by Singaporean authorities that he had flown to that city-state on July 14 en route to a third country in Europe.

The man at the center of the 2004 ballot fixing scandal made the startling revelation during an interview at high noon inside a heavily tinted van inconspicuously parked at the foot of a mountain facing the sea.

A few families basked in the sun at a nearby beach as he talked, denying he had ever spoken to Ms Arroyo to rig the results of last year's presidential election.

He said the opposition should not give him too much credit for Ms Arroyo's victory because "I'm not Superman. I can't (perform) magic."

Garcillano also questioned the authenticity of the so-called "Hello Garci" tape or tapes containing recordings of his alleged conversations with the President. But he promised to tell his story in public soon.

Asked if his testimony would be damaging to President Arroyo or some opposition leaders, he said: "So be it. I'm not protecting her. I'm just telling you my side because that is the truth."

"*Bahala na sa kanila kung sino ang tamaan* (Let the chips fall where they may)," he added.

Opposition senators scoffed at Garcillano's

I NEVER LEFT/ A21

RP opens quest for SEAG crown with 5 golds

THE 23rd Southeast Asian Games formally open with a colorful fireworks display at the Quirino Grandstand in Manila.
REM ZAMORA

By Roy Luarca

A POWERFUL LEAP, A MASTERFUL DIVE, CONtrolled strokes and graceful steps.

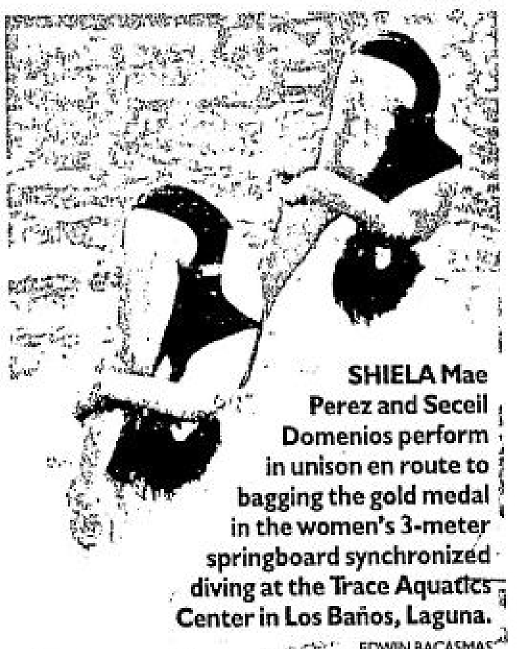
These were the key elements that propelled long jumper Marestella Torres, divers Sheila Mae Perez and Ceseil Domenios, cue artist Ronnie Alcano and partner dancers Michael Mendoza-Belinda Adora and Rico Rosima-Filomena Salvador to gold medals in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games yesterday.

The five-gold haul, coupled with five silvers and four bronzes, catapulted the Filipinos to the early lead in the 11-nation biennial meet that was formally declared open by President Macapagal-Arroyo at the Rizal Park. *(More SEAG stories in Sports, Pages A25-29.)*

Games sked today in Sports, Page A25

Malaysia followed with five golds, highlighted by pole vaulter Rosalinda Samsu's record-smashing effort of 4.10m, two silvers and three bronzes. Samsu broke the 3.9m

RP OPENS/ A20



SHIELA Mae Perez and Seceil Domenios perform in unison en route to bagging the gold medal in the women's 3-meter springboard synchronized diving at the Trace Aquatics Center in Los Baños, Laguna.
EDWIN BACASMAS

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

MARESTELLA Torres lands to a golden finish in the women's long jump event.

Children enjoy veggie servings from giant salad

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN enjoyed their greens at the fifth Baguio Tossed Salad Festival yesterday, a development that hotels here are proud of.

"Now we see by the number of children here that salad really makes a difference," said Gerry Beltran, vice president of the Baguio Association of Hotels and Inns (Bahai).

This indicated that the festival was helping create awareness of proper nutrition, he said.

In previous festivals, children accounted for about 40 percent of the people who savored the salad, according to the Bahai official.

But yesterday, children dominated the queue for the three-ton salad in a 10-foot wide bowl at the Baguio Convention Center.

Their Styrofor bowls were filled with slices

CHILDREN/ A22

Economy absorbing shocks of turmoil, but for how long?

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

DAYS BEFORE THE CRISIS OF THE ARroyo administration reached its turning point on July 8, I wrote that its fall was only a matter of time, that the issue was not when but how President Macapagal-Arroyo would exit. That issue defined the theme of public discourse and speculation in the following months.

During the past five months, the President survived a wave of dangerous challenges, ranging from continuing street protests to an impeachment action in Congress, in the sustained campaign to bring her regime to an early end. How and why the President survived requires some explanation.

Equally begging explanation is why the drive to oust her has lost momentum, leaving her opponents reduced to an exhausted rabble struggling to keep the embers of unrest alive through a mock people's court trial. Five months after the July 8 flash point, Ms Arroyo has withstood in the bunker the siege of the streets. Despite the destabilizing political turbulence, the country's precarious fiscal position has far from collapsed.

On the contrary, the peso, whose exchange rate has always been watched as the indicator of monetary stability, recently staged a rebound. The most recent opinion poll shows that the fall of the President's popularity has stopped and that she has regained public approval by a few points.

This rebound should by no means be taken neither as the beginning of a sustained turnaround of the battered economy nor a promise that the President is

ECONOMY/ A20

Groups to restore 1M hectares of rainforests

By Blanche S. Rivera

ENVIRONMENTALISTS ARE TAKING their battle against mining and logging to the field, literally.

The Haribon Foundation and the Rainforest Restoration Initiative (RFRI) have launched the "Rainforestation Organizations and Advocates (ROAD) to 2020," a campaign to restore one million hectares of Philippine rainforests in the next 15 years.

The massive reforestation campaign comes amid controversial decisions by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to promote mining and allow logging in a protected area.

"It is an urgent call … The DENR memorandum order to resume logging operations of San Jose Timber Corp. within the Samar Island Nature Park makes this call even more urgent," Haribon and the RFRI said in a joint statement.

Environment Secretary Michael T. Defensor signed on Aug. 16 an order allowing the SJTC, a logging firm owned by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, to cut trees within 95,770 hectares of the 333,3000-ha SINP, a globally significant biodiversity site.

"This pivotal decision is giving the wrong signal to the forest restoration work in the country. Attempts to

GROUPS / A6

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Luzon will experience cloudy skies with rainshowers while Visayas and Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of Luzon will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: CYRIL L BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/11/28/05

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

'House, not impeachment, to blame for budget delay'

By TJ Burgonio and Christine O. Avendaño

OPPOSITION SENATORS YESTERDAY SAID the House of Representatives had only itself to blame if Congress fails to pass the proposed P1.056-trillion national budget for 2006 before the yearend.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Sen. Sergio Osmeña III scoffed at congressmen's claims that their failure to transmit the General Appropriations Act to the Senate was an offshoot of the prolonged impeachment proceedings against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"Budget approval is not delayed by impeachment hearings but by the cupidity of House leadership that wants to go where GMA goes," Pimentel said.

Osmeña expressed surprise the budget delay was being blamed on the impeachment proceedings. "Was there an impeachment proceeding in 2004? Because the passage of the 2004 budget was also delayed," he said in an interview.

Speaker Jose de Venecia and Rep. Rolando Andaya, House appropriations committee chair, had admitted that Congress would not be able to pass the 2006 budget this year and had blamed the impeachment proceedings for delaying the budget deliberations.

De Venecia and Andaya said that in the first months of 2006, the government will have to operate under a reenacted 2005 budget.

Osmeña, however, remained optimistic that Congress could pass the 2006 budget by February next year if the House would transmit its version of the budget in early January.

"It will take us three weeks to review it after they give us the budget. We may need one or two weeks more of hearings. And one week to type the report and another week to debate it on the floor," he said.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said the period in which a reenacted 2005 budget would be in force next year could be shortened if the House would submit the budget bill to the Senate in January.

Under the Constitution, appropriation bills originate in the House of Representatives and are sent to the Senate for approval.

Osmeña said reenacting the budget would delay the release of the pay increase of government employees and military personnel, as well as allocations for infrastructure and other basic services, among others.

Malacañang, however, has not completely given up on the budget.

Yesterday, it urged Congress to try to pass the budget this year as it underscored the importance of the government having a new budget by the New Year.

"It is important to the national interest that the members of both the Senate and the House of Representatives, regardless of their political affiliation, focus their efforts on the passage of the 2006 budget," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said.

Bunye said the proposed P1.056-trillion budget was the "backbone" of the government's economic reform agenda, the "anchor" of its pro-poor programs and an "instrument" of empowered governance.

"This document will pay a crucial role in the life of every Filipino, hasten our economic takeoff and build the necessary infrastructure to enable more investments and commercial expansion," he said in a statement.

Crime victims score JDV meddling in case

By Tarra V. Quismundo

POLITICIANS SHOULD NOT INTERVENE WITH JUStice, said Dante Jimenez, founding chair of Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption.

Jimenez had only biting words for Speaker Jose de Venecia, who said the other day that he favored "giving the maximum punishment short of the death penalty" to Spanish-Filipino rape convict Francisco Juan "Paco" Larrañaga, who was convicted along with six others in the brutal rape and murder of the Chiong sisters in Cebu City in 1997.

"JDV (De Venecia) should keep his hands off the [affairs] of the judiciary. He should refrain from issuing irresponsible statements considering that he is the chief legislator of this country ... For me, his statements were foul and very revolting," Jimenez said.

De Venecia had issued the statements after the Spanish newspaper El Pais reported on its website on Nov. 21 that he had promised "measures of grace" for Larrañaga. Like the Catholic Church and European governments, De Venecia is against the death penalty.

Last week, President Macapagal-Arroyo herself assured visiting Spanish officials that Larrañaga's execution would be deferred while she was in power.

An angry Jimenez felt that De Venecia had no business issuing such statements, saying that comments on a judicial decision amounted to a breach of the separation of powers between the legislature and the judiciary.

"It hurts us, victims of heinous crimes, that politicians are intervening with the wheels of justice. They are compromising the law for social democrats and the Church, that's why we have this very violent reaction ... We really abhor this. This is unfair and unjust," Jimenez said.

Jimenez became active in the anticrime movement after his brother was murdered several years ago.

He said Thelma Chiong, mother of the victims, called him yesterday morning to express her disgust over De Venecia's statements. Jimenez said the remarks further "lowers the morale" of families who had lost loved ones to crime.

"This administration has no political will to implement the law. If he (De Venecia) wants to meddle with the death penalty, he should gather his fellow lawmakers and talk about amending the law," Jimenez said.

He said the VACC would send a letter to the Supreme Court to officially question De Venecia's statements on a conviction the high court had already upheld.

On Ms Arroyo's reported assurance to stay Larrañaga's execution while she was President, Jimenez said: "Well if she sticks to that position, that's very unfortunate."

Larrañaga is the son of former Basque pelotari Manuel Larrañaga and Filipino Margarita Gonzalez and is a member of the influential Osmeña clan of Cebu. He along with six other scions of affluent families were convicted and sentenced to death for the rape and murder of the sisters Jacqueline, 23, and Marie Joy Chiong, 20, in Cebu City.

Defense lawyers charged that the trial was marred by irregularities but the Supreme Court eventually upheld the conviction and upgraded their original sentence of life imprisonment to death by lethal injection.

Spain and other European governments and institutions, which are averse to the death penalty, have been pressuring the Philippine government to pardon Larrañaga.

Marcos edicts keep GMA in power—Etta

BAGUIO CITY—A PARTY-LIST GROUP has claimed that President Macapagal-Arroyo and her predecessors have kept intact the presidential decrees that allowed strongman Ferdinand Marcos to maintain a firm grip on power for 20 years.

Akbayan Rep. Etta Rosales told political science students at the University of Baguio here on Saturday that one such decree granted Ms Arroyo blanket authority to appoint over 15,000 government officials, "from every Tom, Dick and Harry to janitors," making the whole Philippine bureaucracy "subservient to the President."

Rosales said Ms Arroyo and former Presidents Corazon Aquino, Fidel Ramos and Joseph Estrada never bothered to expunge the decrees because they helped leverage their position into a formidable power center.

"[Ms Arroyo] is one of the most powerful presidents in the world because of a particular system she inherited from Marcos. The system enables her to appoint people to the Cabinet including minor officials like the assistant to the assistant department heads," she said.

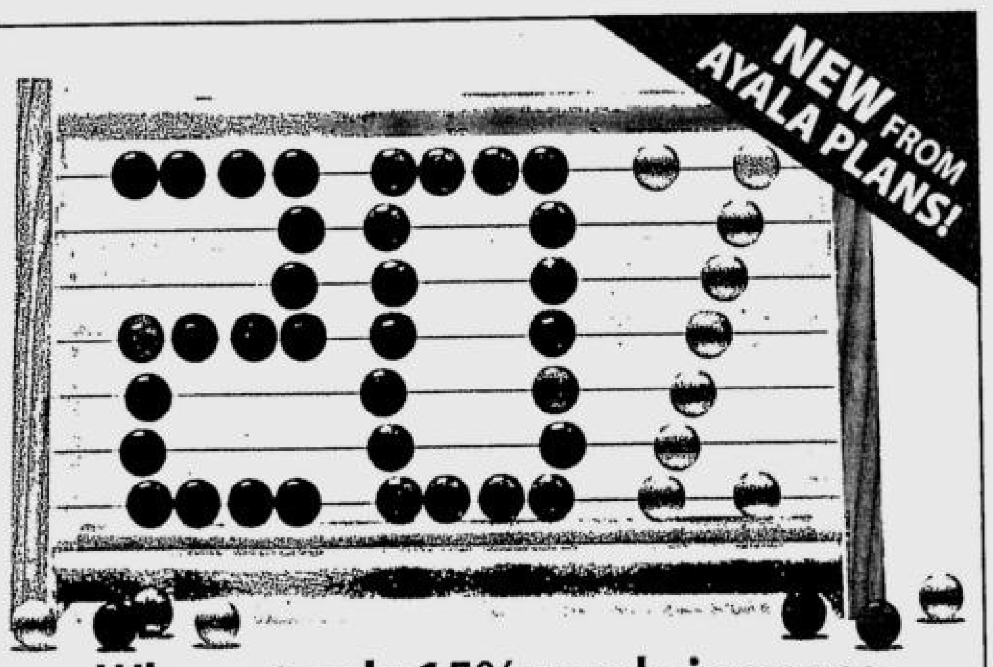
Congress or the larger public "should get rid of this authority of hers," Rosales said.

She said Ms Arroyo's control over most government officials had helped her overcome calls for her ouster following allegations that she cheated in the 2004 presidential elections.

Rosales also accused the President of using tactics employed by Marcos to quell protests. She said Presidential Decree 880, which Marcos issued in 1985, had been cited as basis for the calibrated preemptive response policy of her administration under which protesters have been hosed down.

She said another decree requires the government to automatically appropriate payments for debt servicing, which she claimed allowed foreign bankers to influence government policies.

Rosales said Aquino should have rescinded the directive but instead gave it new life by passing Executive Order 272. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*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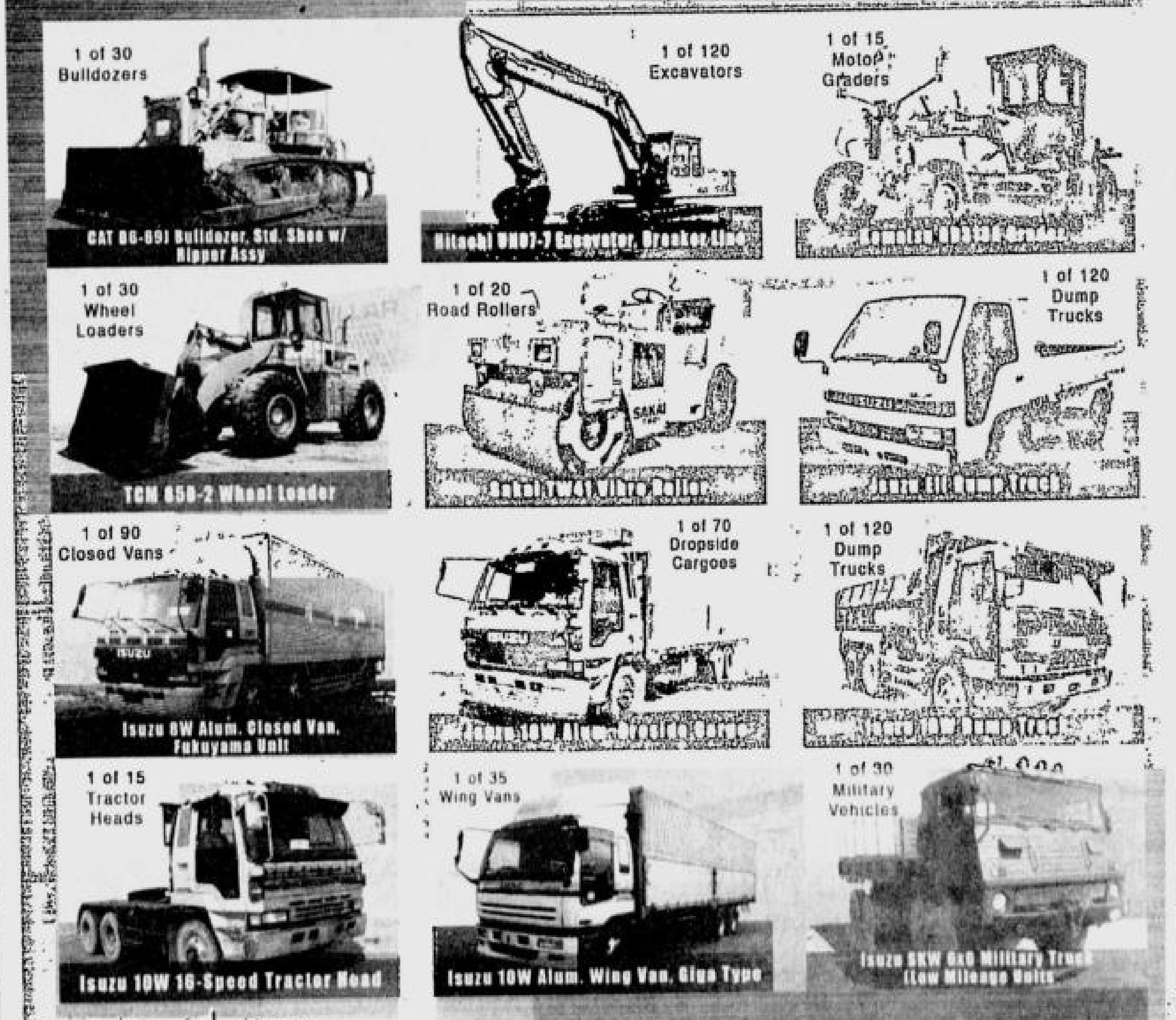
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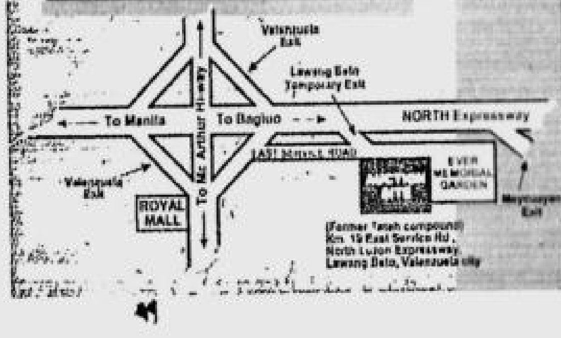

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End of Luisita strike seen

By Jo Martinez-Clemente
PDI Central Luzon Desk

HACIENDA LUISITA, TARLAC City—The striking workers at Hacienda Luisita will not have to spend another Christmas on the picket lines if the results of Friday's negotiations between the sugar estate's management and its agricultural workers are any indication.

Lawyers for Hacienda Luisita Inc. (HLI) and the United Luisita Workers Union (Ulwu) said the over a year-long strike would be over as soon as the few remaining issues between management and the workers were resolved.

Lawyer Vigor Mendoza III, HLI spokesperson, said they were ironing out "just a few loose ends."

Nenita Mahinay, Ulwu counsel, said the strike would likely end next week.

"*May konti pang inaayos* (There are still a few things to settle)," she said.

An Ulwu press statement confirmed the two unions at Hacienda Luisita (Ulwu and the Central Azucarera de Tarlac Labor Union or Catlu) were "on the verge of signing their respective agreements with management which may finally end the most controversial strike in the nation's history."

Thirteen striking workers and supporters died in separate violent incidents that occurred during the strike. Among the victims were Tarlac City Councilor Abelardo Ladera and Catlu president Ricardo Ramos.

The resolution of the labor dispute between Ulwu and HLI had been made a pre-condition for Catlu to sign its own memorandum of agreement (MOA) with management.

Members of Ulwu and Catlu struck simultaneously on Nov. 6 last year after negotiations for a fresh collective bargaining agreement (CBA) for Catlu collapsed and after management terminated 326 farm workers, including Ulwu officers.

While the issues with Catlu were resolved in October, the signing of the MOA was delayed pending the resolution of the issues with Ulwu.

HLI management had recognized the need to resolve the issues with both unions at the same time.

An official of Jose Cojuangco and Sons, Hacienda Luisita's managing firm, earlier said it was important to resolve the issues with the unions simultaneously as they were picketing the same premises.

The official said the unions should now lift their pickets to open the gates of Central Azucarera de Tarlac (CAT), the sugar central at the estate.

Negotiations between Ulwu and management, which were deferred following the murder of Ramos on Oct. 25, resumed on Nov. 9.

Ernesto Teopaco, CAT vice president, brokered the talks with Ulwu. He also headed the negotiations with Ramos and Catlu.

Ulwu, in a statement, said the terms of agreement were based on a seven-point proposal they presented. These included the payment of wages and benefits due to permanent, seasonal and casual workers; the giving of retirement packages to 15 terminated permanent workers, and the rehiring of 52 workers.

Ulwu also proposed managing the harvesting of the remaining sugarcane at the plantation and asked HLI management for financial assistance for crop production for each Ulwu chapter.

'Nothing behind Saycon arrest'

A LAWYER FOR FORmer Public Estates Authority chair Ernest Villareal yesterday said neither politics nor harassment attended the arrest of civil society personality Pastor "Boy" Saycon just before the long weekend.

Villareal had filed a P10-million libel suit against Saycon last August (not in 2003 as the earlier story said) for which a Makati court issued an arrest warrant two weeks ago.

Villareal filed the case after Saycon accused him of involvement in alleged corruption attending the construction of Diosdado Macapagal Avenue in Pasay City.

Villareal's lawyer, Ruy Rondain, said there was no harassment involved because the warrant was issued days before it was served on Saycon at his Ayala Alabang residence at 6:30 p.m. last Friday.

Arresting a suspect late on a Friday or over a weekend is prohibited since one would be hard put to post bail with offices closed.

In Saycon's case, since Monday was declared a nonworking holiday by President Macapagal-Arroyo in observance of Bonifacio Day, he would have had to sit in jail three days.

On Saturday, Saycon turned himself in and posted a P10,000-bond with the Office of the Clerk of Court in Makati and was granted temporary liberty by Judge Selma Alaras.

His lawyer, Leonard de Vera, claimed it was a deliberate effort by the people behind the "harassment" to have the warrant served on Friday night so that Saycon would have to spend three days in jail.

"This to us is a pure case of harassment. There seems to be too much politics behind the case... we know Mr. Villareal is close to the powers-that-be," De Vera had said.

"I don't know the powers-that-be Mr. Saycon was referring to but if my client was indeed close to powerful people, Mr. Saycon would not have been able to evade arrest on Friday night," said Rondain.

"The warrant of arrest would have been [served] much earlier if we were really close to anyone so influential," he added.

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Mindanao leaders say Islamic state would eat them alive

ZAMBOANGA CITY—LOCAL EXecutives of several provinces and cities in Mindanao have rejected the inclusion of their respective areas in a proposed Islamic state, according to Mayor Celso Lobregat.

Lobregat said this was the consensus reached by local executives [illegible] City, Isabela City, Pagadian City, Dipolog City, Dapitan City and the provinces of Zamboanga Sibugay, Zamboanga del Sur and Zamboanga del Norte during a forum held here over the weekend.

Earlier, the city's Sangguniang Panlungsod passed a resolution opposing the reported initial agreement between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) to divide Mindanao into areas designated as ancestral lands and homelands to be governed by the MILF for the "BangsaMoro People."

Lobregat said this would be a "complete sellout" since the region would be gobbled up by the MILF once Mindanao was partitioned.

"We will be eaten up alive," Lobregat said, "if we Mindanaoans do not react."

Local executives of General Santos City and Sarangani province also want to be excluded from the Islamic state.

The MILF earlier said it would propose the holding of a plebiscite aimed at carving out a separate homeland in Mindanao.

Mayor Pedro Acharon said the inclusion of General Santos and Sarangani in a separate state would derail the area's progress and could fuel further misunderstanding between Muslims and Christians.

Acharon said that residents of General Santos and Sarangani had already spoken during earlier plebiscites aimed at expanding the area of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

During exploratory peace talks in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, last September, the government and the MILF successfully hurdled the most difficult issue on the agenda—ancestral domain.

The addition of the ancestral domain accord to the two previous agreements signed on security (2001) and rehabilitation and development (2002) completed the requirement of the Tripoli Agreement on Peace of 2001.

Rolly San Juan and Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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Moro groups want US soldiers out of Sulu

ZAMBOANGA CITY—MUSLIM ORGANIZATIONS in Mindanao are calling for the immediate pull-out of American troops from Sulu for allegedly violating the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA).

The Union of Muslims for Morality and Truth (Ummat) and the Concerned Citizens of Sulu (CCS) called for the withdrawal following reports that US soldiers had participated in operations against Abu Sayyaf bandits and gunmen loyal to former Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) chair Nur Misuari.

"What would US soldiers be doing within the perimeter of the area of engagement right after the bombs have fallen in Indanan if they were not party to the military offensives?" Jolo Councilor Temojin Tulawie said.

Tulawie, who is also a convenor of the CCS, said his staffers, Ustadz Salilahim Sarawi and Musa Siayo, confirmed that four Americans soldiers were sighted during military operations in the villages of Kajatian, Timbangan and Bato-bato in Indanan town.

"This is a palpable act of intervention of the US military in Mindanao affairs. They should stop pretending to be peacemakers when they are in fact the biggest provocateurs and warmongers in the world," Tulawie said.

Human Rights Commissioner lawyer Nasser Marohomsalic, head convenor of Ummat, said the US intervention "highlights the dangers posed by the VFA which is open to exploitation by visiting US troops."

"The alleged involvement of US troops in the military attacks in Sulu is a direct violation of the 1987 Philippine Constitution which prohibits foreign military from participating in direct combat operations on Philippine soil," Marohomsalic said in a statement.

US Army Lt. Col. Mark Zimmer, public affairs officer of Joint Special Operation Task Force Philippines, insisted the American troops were "simply extending humanitarian help to the people."

"We are not in any way involved in military operations conducted by the Philippine Armed Forces," he said.

Zimmer said they had been in the area since October for the implementation of projects in Panamao, Jolo, Indanan and Patikul towns.

"We are in Sulu as per request of the Philippine government and we are there to train, assist and advise Filipino soldiers," Zimmer added.

The humanitarian help, Zimmer said, included new classrooms and water systems in Sulu.

But Tulawie said the humanitarian missions were "merely a cover for the true agenda behind their presence in our province."

Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Cops turn to computers for help

COMPUTERS CHART WHEN, WHERE AND which crimes occur to make police deployment more effective, according to a senior police official.

Deputy Director General Avelino Razon Jr. said the police, in a few key cities, now use computers to create graphs of the crime situation.

"Through comstat (computer statistics), we found out that our [police] deployment was wrong. In many areas, we deployed more men during the day when there were more crimes committed at night," Razon said.

The official clarified that to deploy more men at night was "not the rule of thumb."

"It depends on the precinct commander, but now deployment is aided by comstat," he said. "A precinct commander must know when, where and which crimes occur [in his territory]."

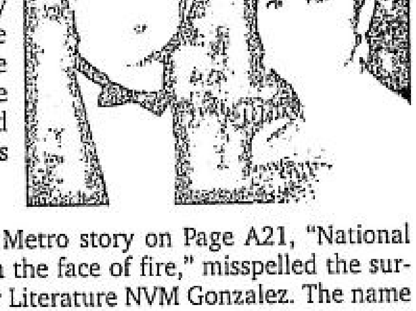
There are about 115,000 uniformed and non-uniformed police personnel, a third of them on duty at any given time.

The Rizal Police had used a similar computer program to plot crime data on a chart. Sr. Supt. Leocadio Santiago, then provincial police chief, developed the program and offered it for free to other provincial police stations.

Razon said he got the idea of using computers from a book on the crime situation in New York City. When the New York Police District started using computer models to plot crime rates and occurrence, the NYPD's deployment of cops became more effective; it helped bring down their crime rate, according to Razon.

Luige A. del Puerto

Corrections



IN THE NOV. 25 issue, a caption in Maurice Arcache's column, "Without Batting an Eyelash," on Page G2 of the Lifestyle section erroneously identified the couple in the photo at right. They are Sander Tantoco and his wife Mons Romulo Tantoco and not Ricky Delgado and his wife Mandy de la Rama.

* * *

IN YESTERDAY'S issue, a Metro story on Page A21, "National artist's widow stays cool in the face of fire," misspelled the surname of National Artist for Literature NVM Gonzalez. The name ends with a "z" not an "s." The same error appeared in the photo caption that accompanied the story.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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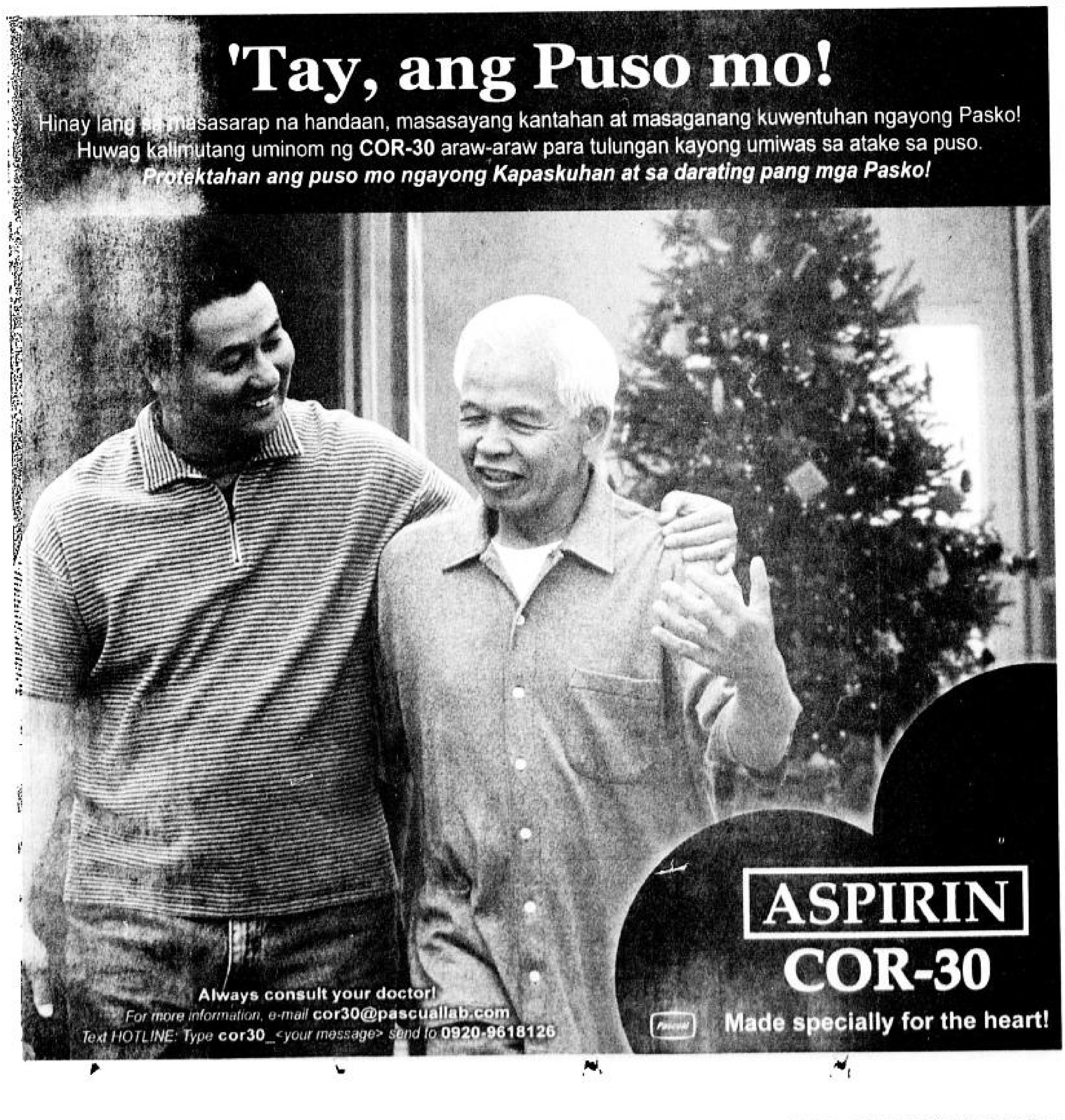
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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, November 28, 2005
1st Week of Advent

1st Reading: Is 2:1-5
Gospel: Matthew 8:5-11

When Jesus entered Capernaum, an army captain approached him to ask his help, "Sir, my servant lies sick at home. He is paralyzed and suffers terribly." Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him."

The captain answered, "I am not worthy to have you under my roof. Just give an order and my boy will be healed. For I myself, a junior officer, give orders to my soldiers. And if I say to one: 'Go,' he goes, and if I say to another: 'Come,' he comes, and to my servant: 'Do this,' he does it."

When Jesus heard this he was astonished and said to those who were following him, "I tell you, I have not found such faith in Israel. I say to you, many will come from east and west and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob at the feast in the kingdom of heaven."

Commentary

"I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. Just give an order and my boy will be healed." A statement of obedience, of knowing whose authority you live under and what authority is most true and powerful. This is a military man who knows that before the face of Jesus, his authority is nothing. Who do we obey? Who do we belong to? When Jesus says: "Do this." Do we actually move to comply? Jesus wills to heal us, not only of illness. He wills to take our divided hearts and turn them wholeheartedly to the service of life and those in need. Come, Lord Jesus, come!

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Filipinos in denial over flu–health exec

By Christian V. Esguerra

FILIPINOS ARE LARGELY "IN DENIAL" ABOUT bird flu, adding to the gravity of the problem when the virus finally reaches the country, a senior health official said yesterday.

Dr. Enrique Tayag, the government's chief epidemiologist, said officials were having a hard time convincing many residents in the barangay level to prepare for the deadly virus.

Bird flu has killed at least 62 people, mostly in Vietnam, and continues to spread from Asia to Europe despite stringent measures.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III earlier warned it was likely the virus would reach the country; it was just a question of when.

"There should be enough fear among the people," Tayag, head of the Department of Health's National Epidemiology Center, told the INQUIRER. "But so far, the public is still in denial."

Tayag said the attitude came about largely because there has not been a single bird flu case in the country.

Two to three weeks ago, he said, members of the National Avian Influenza Task Force had gone around 40 provinces to drum up awareness about the impending arrival of bird flu in the Philippines. The problem was the response was not the same, say, from residents in Bulacan or from provinces that have no wetlands to worry about, he said.

"Some people don't seem worried because they've yet to encounter a case in their respective areas," he said. "That's not the right attitude."

He said a common question officials found hard to answer was when the virus would arrive in the country.

"It's very difficult to tell because it can happen anytime within the next two weeks or in the next several months," he said. "We don't want to start a panic but we also cannot assure the public that we would forever be free from bird flu."

Tayag urged local governments to put up their own avian influenza task forces to allow efficient reporting and management of cases even before a pandemic breaks out.

The World Health Organization earlier warned the time was ripe for another pandemic and it would most likely come from bird flu. The fear is that the virus might develop a strain capable of moving from person to person.

In the Philippines, among the quickest local governments to respond was Candaba town which is a pit stop of migratory birds from affected countries like China.

Singapore announces scholarships

THE SINGAPORE EMBASSY IS RECEIVING applications for the Dr. Goh Keng Swee (GKS) Scholarship.

The grant was established by the Singapore financial community to honor former Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Goh Keng Swee who helped foster the city-state's economic growth and development.

The GKS Scholarship is awarded to outstanding individuals from the Asia-Pacific region who wish to pursue undergraduate studies in approved disciplines at Singapore universities. The course of study should be relevant to the financial sector.

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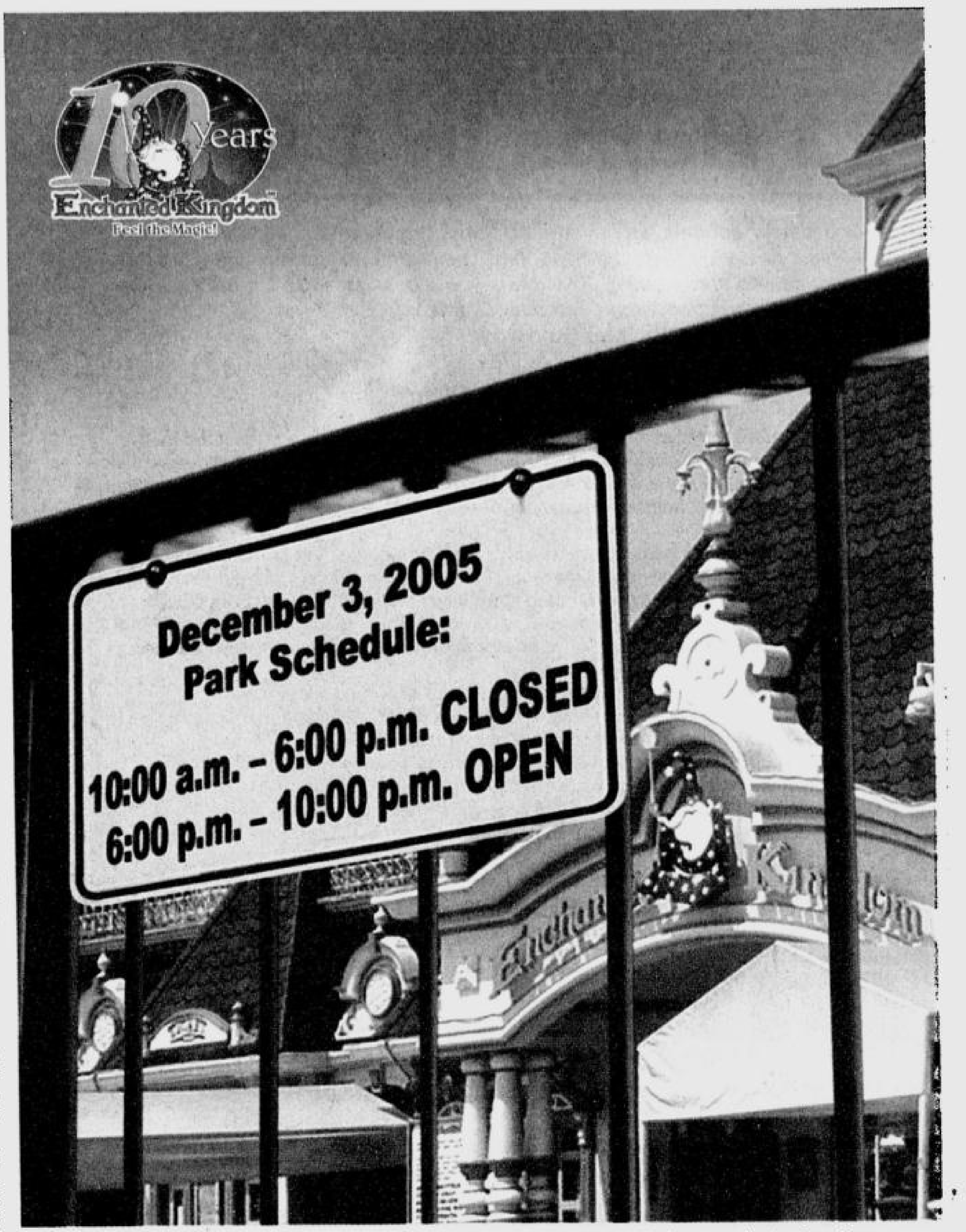
Application forms may be obtained from the technical cooperation officer of the Singapore Embassy, 35th floor, Tower I, The Enterprise Center, Ayala Ave. corner Paseo de Roxas, Makati City. The telephone number is (02) 751-2345; fax (02) 759-5270. Requests for forms must be accompanied by a stamped self-addressed envelope. Deadline for the submission of applications is Dec. 30.



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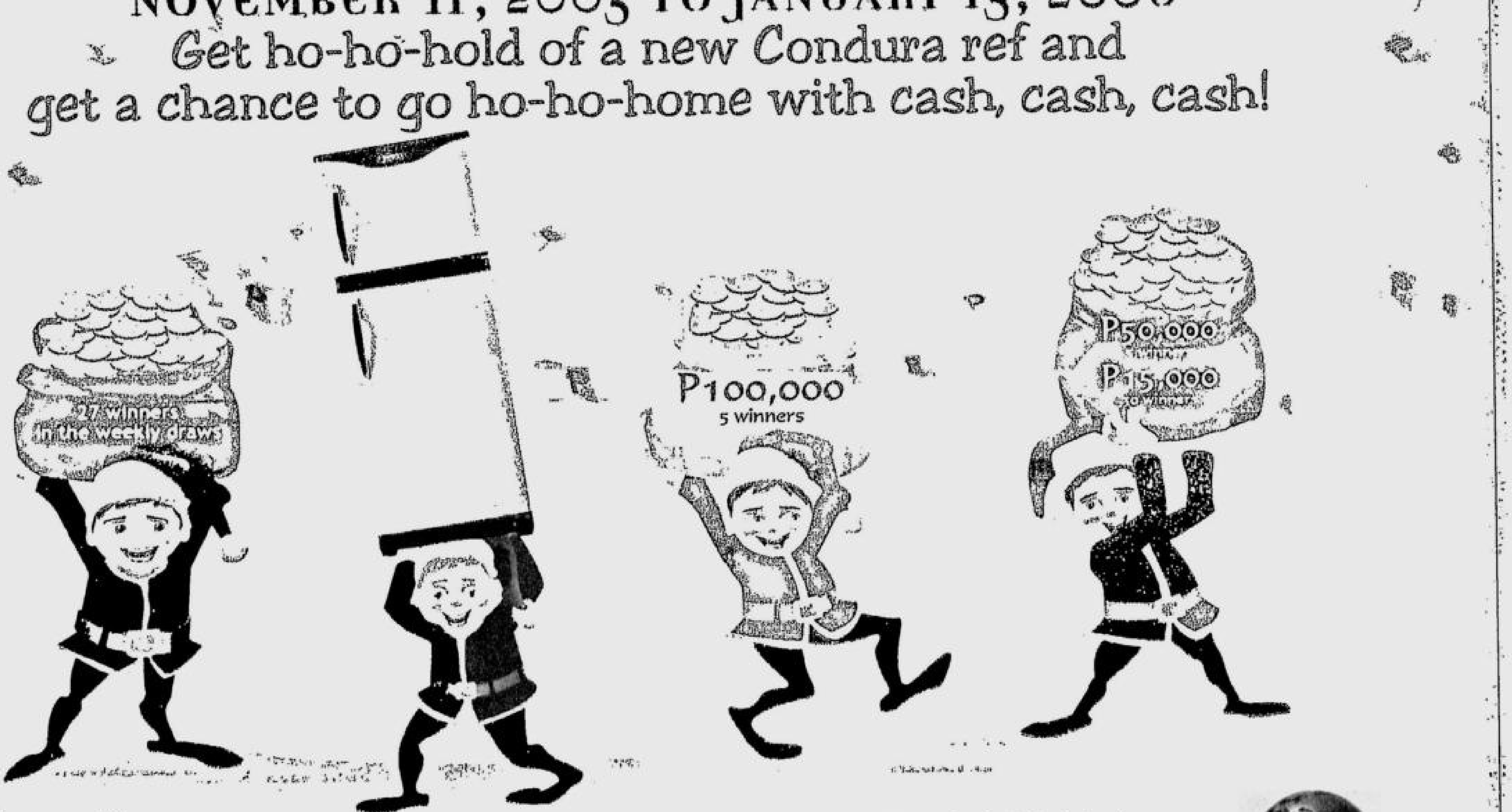

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See posters for details.

CONDURA WORLD CLASS

Per DTI - NCR No. 2604, Series of 2005

Groups to restore 1M hectares of rainforests

From page A1

strengthen DENR's capacity to create change has been minimal simply because pressures from political and other interest groups prevail," Haribon and the RFRI said.

Culmination of signature drive

Haribon cited studies showing that if logging, mining and other extractive activities continued, the Philippines would have only about 320,000 ha of primary forest left by 2010.

The ROAD to 2020 campaign was the culmination of Haribon's one-million signature drive against commercial logging and mining in natural forests, Haribon executive director Anabelle Plantilla said.

Haribon began collecting the signatures in February, or two months after flash floods and landslides displaced and killed thousands of people in Quezon, Aurora and other parts of Luzon last year.

Native species, rainforests

The ROAD to 2020 differs from other reforestation initiatives in its use of purely native species and its focus on rainforests or rainforestation.

The Philippines used to import seedlings for the government's reforestation campaign. The DENR has a reforestation target of 86,000 ha every five years.

Haribon has identified 170 priority sites for conservation, including forests that are rich depositories of flora and fauna. These are Philippine Eagle sites, "important" bird sites, watershed priority areas, protected areas, TLA (timber license agreement) areas, geothermal reserves and mangroves.

Plantilla said the rainforestation could involve local government units, communities, religious groups, youth and other groups.

National consultation

Haribon led a national consultation on rainforest restoration on Nov. 16-18, bringing together about 150 representatives of indigenous peoples, funding agencies, environmental groups, the DENR and private stakeholders. They discussed the strategy for ROAD 2020.

"Despite the many investments infused into the forestry sector ... policy as well as operational reforms remain wanting," the group said.

"Such investments fail to address the issue that the country's forests are in critical condition. (They) perpetuate the limited view of forests as simply sources of timber and money, and not the backbone for biodiversity and critical ecological services," the ROAD 2020 campaigners said.

A valuation study done by experts on the biodiversity of the SINP in 2001 showed that the park was worth $43.5 billion over 25 years, with a net projected value of $12 billion.

In contrast, the estimated value of bauxite deposits in the park is pegged at $21 billion.

The SINP is a major component of the $12.8-million Samar Island Biodiversity Project, which has been supported by international groups because of the global significance of its flora and fauna.

Environment Secretary Defensor has said that Samar, one of the poorest islands in the country, should learn to open up to sustainable mining and logging if it wanted to improve its economy.

Garcillano spent his time reading, writing

From page A1

mer election commissioner said he was reading gave him solace. It was titled: "Why Worry: How to Live Without Fear or Worry."

TV GRAB FROM ABS-CBN

GARCILLANO yesterday

Written by Ven. Dr. K. Sri Dhammananda, the book deals with "fear and worry (that) seem to be part and parcel of human existence," the 68-year-old Garcillano told the INQUIRER in a mountainside interview in Central Mindanao yesterday.

The man who had been the target of massive criticisms for allegedly helping President Macapagal-Arroyo cheat in the 2004 election and who had become the butt of a thousand jokes talked to the INQUIRER for almost two hours inside a heavily tinted van.

Although described as a man on the run, Garcillano looked like he had even put on weight. He wore a green polo shirt and had a faded red Muslim scarf slung over his shoulders.

Like a spring

Garcillano said he stumbled upon the book after dropping out of public view about five months ago.

The book was like a spring in the wilderness, he said.

"While reading it, I began to realize that I should not worry too much," he said, pointing to the distant jungle and the mountains beyond it.

"This is where I live. Here people respect me, love me," he said.

Peace somewhere

Facing possibly his most trying time, Garcillano tried to give the impression of being a man who seemed to have found tranquility in the middle of nowhere.

He claimed to be "at peace" with "Muslim brothers."

He was not apparently always on the run.

Away from public scrutiny, Garcillano said he had a chance to start drafting his autobiography.

"I have been keeping myself away and writing some of the memoirs that I may be able to make use of later on," he said.

Planting trees

Hours before the interview, Garcillano even found time to take a dip in a spring.

When not jotting down his thoughts, he said he would plant root crops and fruit-bearing trees.

"I love farming," said Garcillano, who owns a farm in Bukidnon.

"I've been here for the last 44 years," he said of Mindanao, recalling that he first set foot on the island when he was assigned as Comelec special attorney in Sulu in 1961.

He eventually settled in Cagayan de Oro City, after marrying his wife Grace.

Everything for power

He said privacy was relative in a war-torn region, but "I have privacy because I'm more comfortable here among my friends."

While in hiding, he said he saw a lot of things that should be "corrected" in this country.

"I'm very much discouraged because our leadership is not interested in the welfare of our people and the country. Just because they would like to grab power, they will do everything even to the damage of the country. They're not interested in improving the economy of the country."

At his age, he said he had seen enough to convince him that the country was in a deep rut.

Plans for the future

Does he have plans for the future?

"I want to rest for a while, to stay in the farm may be. I'm still going to plan out what I will do for the next five, 10, 15 years. As of now I don't want to get any government posts."

If possible, Garcillano said he wanted to go back to Sulu one of these days, to fulfill the book's end goal—to start making the most out of life to "give fresh inspiration and hope to whoever reads it without cynicism and doubt."

All this coming from a man whose alleged doctoring of poll results sparked a dangerous political crisis and split the country apart.

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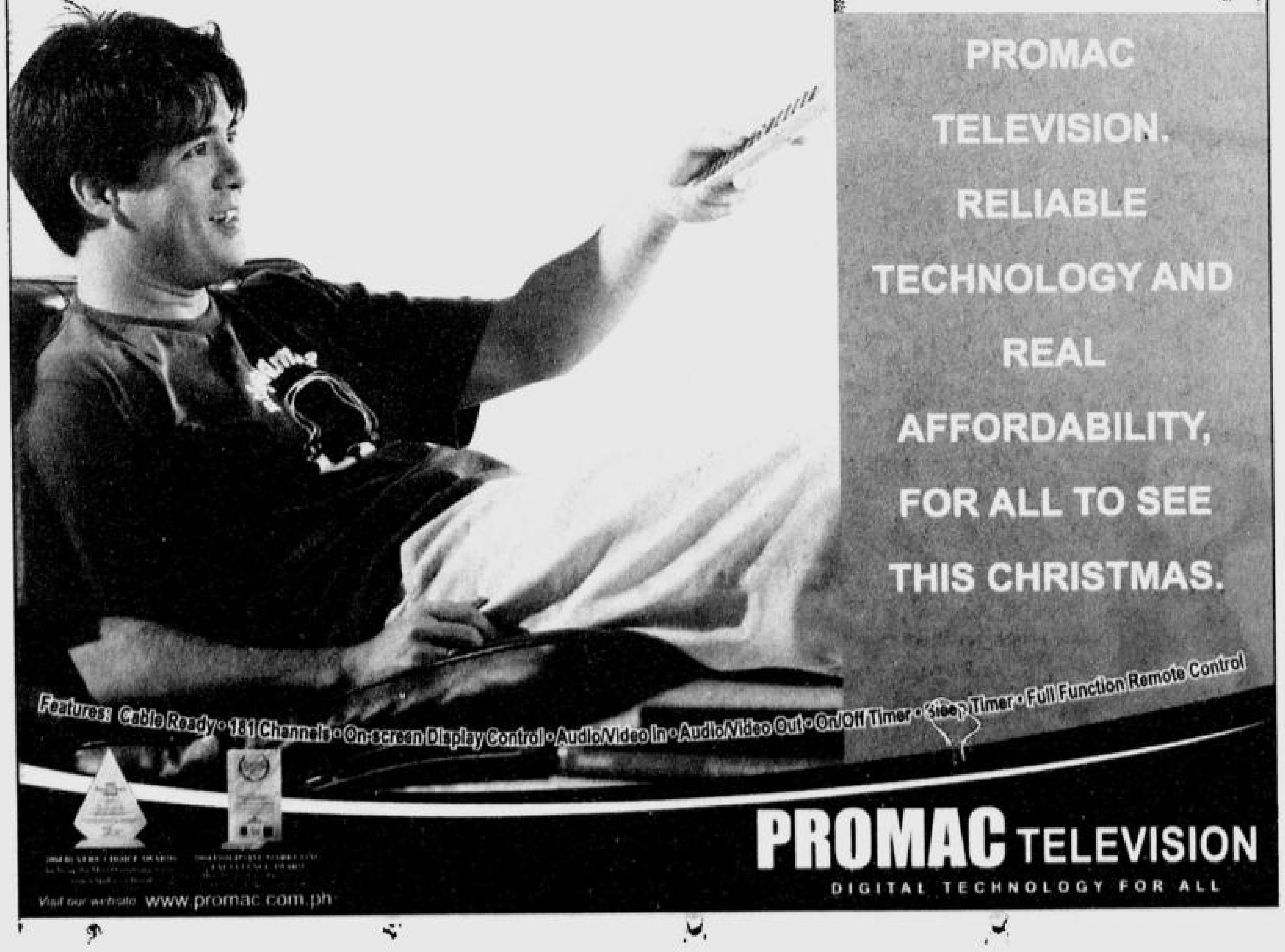

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After comfort women, Japan helps elderly

By Volt Contreras

AFTER EXTENDING APOLOGIES to Filipino "comfort women," the Japanese government has lined up more humanitarian projects for the elderly, this time not necessarily victims of World War II atrocities but of present-day poverty and neglect.

The Japanese Embassy in Manila said the projects include the renovation, equipment upgrade, and service improvements of the geriatric clinic at the Philippine General Hospital, the Golden Acres Home for the Aged in Quezon City and a similar home run by the Bahay Puso Apostolate Foundation Inc. in Balanga, Bataan.

The embassy marked the "success" of Japan's compensation program for Filipino comfort women at a function last week honoring three ranking Philippine government officials for facilitating the program from 1997 to 2002.

Tokyo's Ambassador to Manila Ryuichiro Yamazaki gave commendations to Chief Presidential Legal Counsel and former Justice Undersecretary Merceditas Gutierrez and to former Social Welfare Undersecretaries Belinda Manahan and Lourdes Balanon.

Yamazaki cited their roles as leaders of a task force that documented and helped Filipino comfort women obtain redress through the Asian Women's Fund.

Established in 1995, the AWF is a private sector initiative supported by the Japanese government which has helped Tokyo "extend atonement and support" to the aging victims, an embassy statement said.

"In the Philippines, in spite of the difficulties anticipated because of the delicate nature of the issues involved, AWF activities were successfully implemented through the devoted efforts of the task force," the embassy added.

From 1997 to 2002, the AWF provided every identified former comfort woman with 2 million yen, along with "a letter of sincere apology and remorse" from the Prime Minister of Japan, and medical and welfare support worth 1.2 million yen from the Japanese government.

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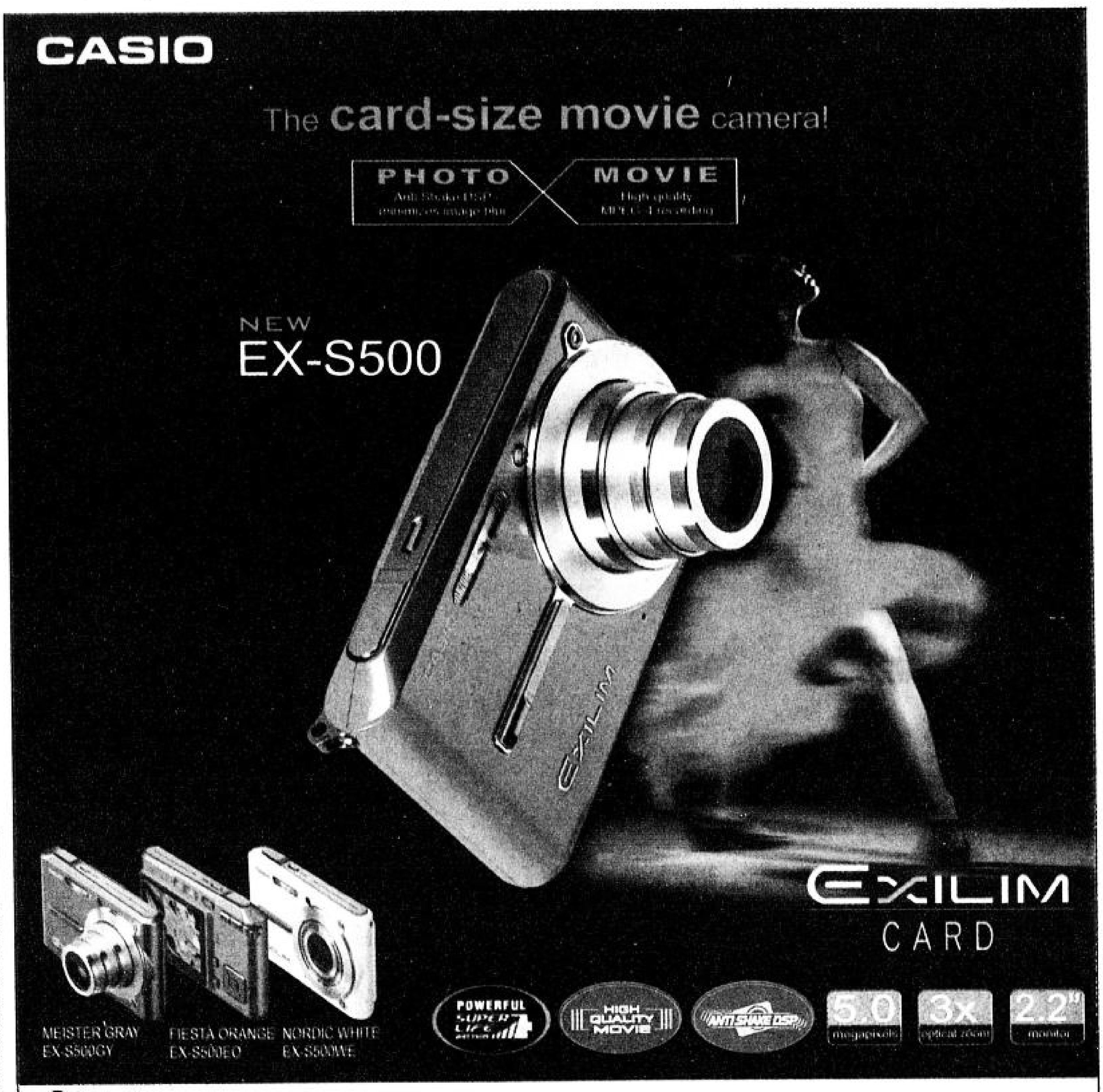
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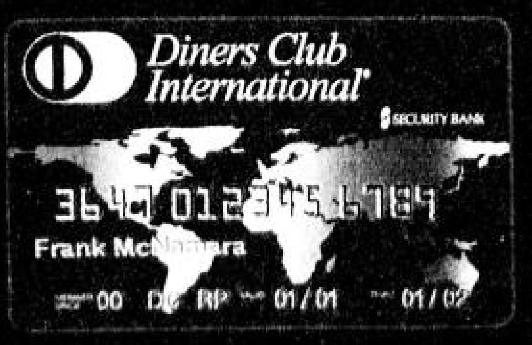
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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

White House leans toward Iraq pullout

WASHINGTON—THE WHITE HOUSE ON SATURday for the first time claimed ownership of an Iraq withdrawal plan, arguing that a troop pullout blueprint unveiled this past week by a Democratic senator was "remarkably similar" to its own.

It also signaled its acceptance of a recent US Senate amendment designed to pave the way for a phased US military withdrawal from the violence-torn country.

The statement by White House spokesperson Scott McClellan came in response to a commentary published in The Washington Post by Joseph Biden, the top Democrat of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, in which he said US forces will begin leaving Iraq next year "in large numbers."

Even though President George W. Bush has never publicly issued his own withdrawal plan and criticized calls for an early exit, the White House said many of the ideas expressed by the senator were its own.

In the statement, which was released under the headline "Senator Biden Adopts Key Portions Of Administration's Plan For Victory In Iraq," McClellan said the Bush administration welcomed Biden's voice in the debate.

"Today, Senator Biden described a plan remarkably similar to the administration's plan to fight and win the war on terror," the spokesperson went on to say.

He added that as Iraqi security forces gain strength and experience, "we can lessen our troop presence in the country without losing our capability to effectively defeat the terrorists."

McClellan said the White House now saw "a strong consensus" building in Washington in favor of Bush's strategy in Iraq.

According to Biden, the United States will move about 50,000 servicemen out of the country by the end of 2006, and "a significant number" of the remaining 100,000 the year after.

The blueprint also calls for leaving only an unspecified "small force" either in Iraq or across the border to strike at concentrations of insurgents, if necessary.

Less than two weeks ago, McClellan blasted Democratic Representative John Murtha, saying that by calling for an immediate withdrawal from Iraq, the congressman was "endorsing the policy positions of Michael Moore," a stridently anti-war Hollywood filmmaker.

Biden's ideas, relayed first in a Nov. 21 speech in New York, however, got a much friendlier reception.

The Biden plan calls for preparatory work to be done in the first six months of next year, ahead of the envisaged pullout.

AFP

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Suicide bomber blows up gas station in Iraq

SAMARRA, IRAQ—A SUICIDE BOMBER DRIVing a pick-up truck ploughed into a petrol station in northern Iraq Saturday, setting off a fiery explosion that killed at least five people and injured 16.

The attack on the outskirts of Samarra, some 125 km north of Baghdad, devastated the petrol station and set a dozen cars ablaze, police and witnesses said.

The bomber "drove up in an old pick-up truck with three sheep in the back," said Naser Ahmed, a 23-year-old employee of the petrol station.

"He arrived at the gate and tried to enter, but couldn't get very far because there were other cars in the way. Then he shouted 'Allah Akhbar' (God is great) and blew himself up.

"The raging fire caught the cars one by one," according to Ahmed who was slightly hurt.

Nasir Motar, 40, who helped run the petrol station, said he was in the office when the bomb went off.

"When I rushed outside there were people with their clothes on fire," he said.

Samarra hospital doctor Khalil Ahmed said they received the bodies of six people killed, including the bomber, along with 16 injured.

In other violence, three Iraqi soldiers were shot dead north of Baghdad and a US contractor and four Iraqis were wounded in a bomb blast targeting a US military convoy in the capital.

The US military also announced the death of a US soldier killed on Friday when his vehicle hit a roadside bomb in Hit, western Iraq.

His death brings to at least 2,112 the number of US military personnel killed in Iraq since the March 2003 invasion, according to an AFP toll based on Pentagon figures.

Meanwhile, a top aide to President Jalal Talabani suggested that some rebel groups were ready to engage in the political process, after Talabani appealed for them to renounce violence and join a dialogue.

AFP

Gopal Godse, coconspirator in Gandhi slay, dies

NEW DELHI—GOPAL VINAYAK GODSE, THE last surviving conspirator in the assassination of Indian independence leader and pacifist icon Mohandas Gandhi, has died at age 86, media reports said.

Godse died at his home in the city of Pune late Saturday, the Press Trust of India news agency quoted his son Nana Godse as saying. No cause of death was given and family members could not immediately be reached.

Godse, whose brother Nathuram shot the pacifist who led India to independence, served 16 years in jail for his involvement in the 1948 killing.

Godse remained unrepentant for his role in killing Gandhi—who fought for equality in a nation sharply divided by caste and became one of the most revered men in modern history.

"He was a very cruel person for the Hindus," Godse said of Gandhi in a 2003 interview with The Associated Press.

Godse believed Gandhi turned his back on Hindus, allowing British India to be divided in 1947 into today's states of India and Pakistan.

In the eyes of Godse and his small band of Hindu extremists, Gandhi's calls for nonviolence were part of a plot to allow Hindus to be slaughtered by Muslims.

Godse was the last surviving member of the group that conspired to attack Gandhi on Jan. 30, 1948. That evening, Gandhi, a frail 78-year-old, was walking toward the prayer ground in the garden of a New Delhi home when Nathuram Godse stepped in front of him and fired three shots. Nathuram Godse and another man were hanged for Gandhi's murder.

"We did not want this man to live," Godse said in the interview. "We did not want this man to die a natural death, even if 10 lives were to be lost for that purpose."

After his release from jail Godse lived in Pune, largely living off royalties from books he wrote on Gandhi and the assassination.

He is survived by his wife Sindhu Godse, a son and two daughters, PTI reported.

AP

Russia's troubled Chechnya votes for a new parliament

GROZNY, RUSSIA—CHECHENS WERE voting on Sunday for a regional assembly that is unlikely to appease anti-Moscow rebels but is expected to cement the power of a local pro-Russian strongman.

The poll marks the end of a unilateral peace plan drawn up by Moscow for the turbulent region. With a parliament, it will have all the government functions needed to make it—on paper—a normal part of the Russian state.

The voting started at 8 a.m. amid high security and the region's pro-Moscow president, Alu Alkhanov, was among the first to vote in his home town of Urus-Martan, predicting at least 70 percent of turnout.

"We've been through the phase of military action. Now we've begun reconstruction," Itar-Tass news agency quoted him as saying on the eve of voting. "Now we're starting to build a republic with all the necessary trappings."

President Vladimir Putin, who sent troops back into Chechnya in 1999 to end a brief period of effective independence, has said the poll will allow "difficult questions to be resolved openly, in a civilized way, and not through force."

RIA news agency quoted Alkhanov as saying that four repentant rebels took part in the race for 18 seats in the regional assembly's upper house and 40 seats in the lower chamber.

"This shows once again that we are on our way to democracy," he said. "Our policy is targeted at uniting the people. We should help those who want to return to peaceful life."

Seven parties are taking part, but few doubt that people loyal to Deputy Prime Minister Ramzan Kadyrov—the de facto pro-Moscow leader of the region—will pack the assembly.

Kadyrov's power stems from his thousands of irregular troops—most of them, like him, former rebels—that are accused by rights groups of brutality against local people in their fight for control.

"The non-Kadyrov figures will be a minority and will be subordinate to the pro-Kadyrov majority," said Boris Makarenko, an analyst from the Center of Political Technologies.

The rebels, whose battle for independence has included killing many civilians, call Kadyrov a Russian stooge and say the poll will do nothing to persuade them to disarm.

"The upcoming elections have nothing in common with a real political process. All it does is push further away the day when there will be a real political solution, and lead to the expansion of the theater of war," Akhmed Zakayev, rebel envoy abroad, told a London conference on the eve of the poll.

"The responsibility for the consequences lies with the Russian government."

The 100,000 Russian troops in and around Chechnya, along with Kadyrov's irregulars and other pro-Moscow Chechen forces, face separatist attacks daily. Russia does not publish a death toll, but observers say the war may have cost as many as 20,000 soldiers' lives.

Some officials have put the number of dead for the 11-year war, including civilians, as high as 160,000. *Reuters*

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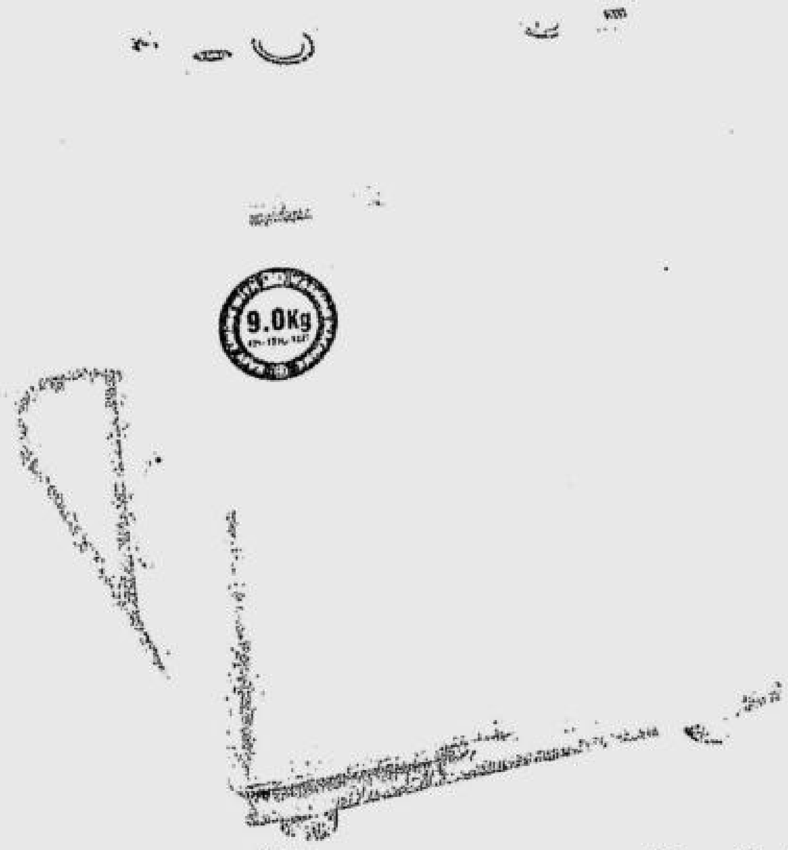

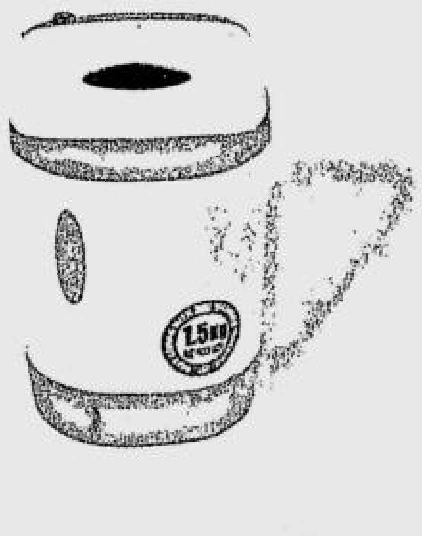

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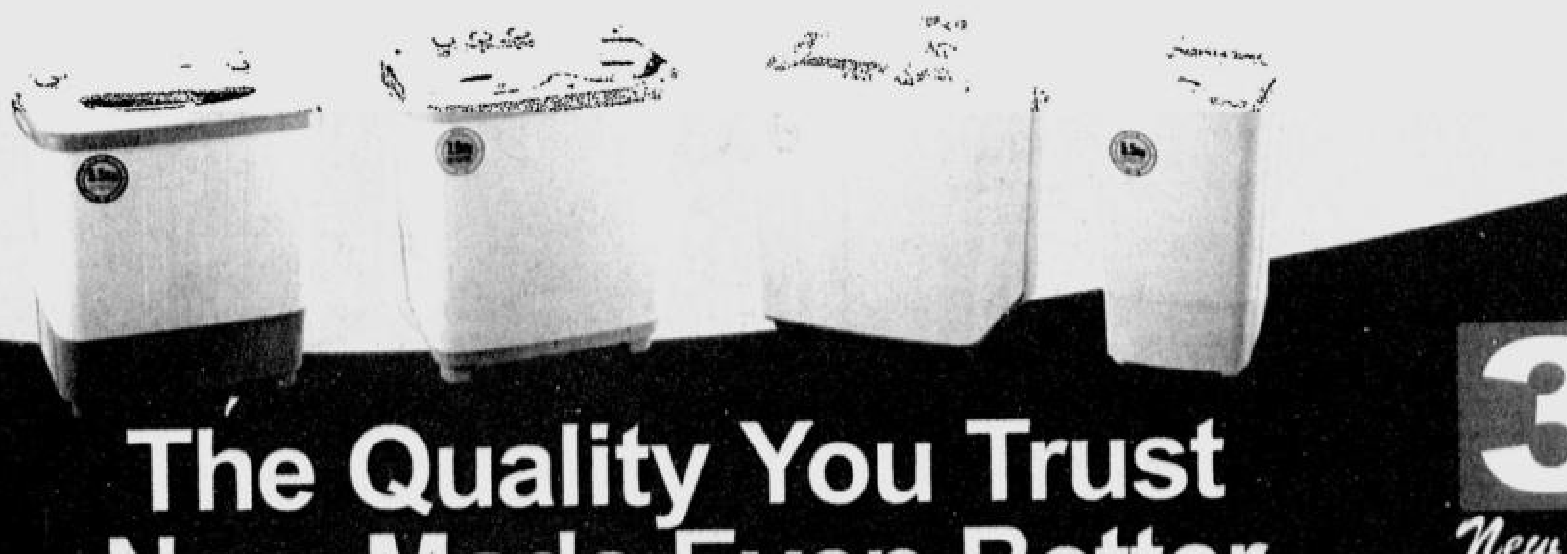

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Terror plot to kill judge in Saddam trial thwarted

BAGHDAD—IRAQI POLICE SAID THEY HAD smashed an al-Qaida cell plotting to kill the chief judge in charge of building the case against ousted Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, whose trial resumes on Monday after a five-week recess.

"We arrested 12 members of a cell linked to the Iraqi branch of al-Qaida during a dawn raid on a house in eastern Kirkuk," in northern Iraq, police Col. Anwar Kader said Saturday.

"They confessed during questioning to planning to kill (chief judge) Raed al-Juhi this week."

Juhi is the chief investigative judge on the Iraqi High Tribunal which is tasked with judging former regime officials, including Saddam, for crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide.

Kader said all the suspects were Iraqi Sunni Arabs from Kirkuk, from Saddam's hometown of Tikrit or from the restive western province of Al-Anbar.

The 12 suspects also confessed to helping to carry out suicide attacks in the Iraqi Kurdish city of Sulaimaniyah in October in which 10 people were killed, he said.

Security will be a top priority when the trial of Saddam and seven former henchmen resumes Monday in Baghdad on charges of killing 148 men and youths from the Shiite town of Dujail, north of the capital, after the former leader escaped an assassination attempt there in 1982.

Saddam, 68, who refuses to recognize the court, and his former aides have pleaded not guilty to the charges. They face the death penalty if convicted.

Saddam is likely to face a raft of other charges, ranging from his massacre of Kurds in the north of the country in 1988, to that of Shiites in the south in 1991, and crimes committed during the wars against Iran and Kuwait.

Iraqi officials said they chose to start with the Dujail case because it is relatively staighforward and well-documented. *AFP*

SADDAM in Oct. 19, 2005 photo AFP

Saddam: 'No. 1' who led Iraq to war and ruin

BAGHDAD—SADDAM HUSSEIN, WHOSE TRIAL starts in earnest on Monday, is accused of murdering thousands of his citizens and led oil-rich Iraq to ruin in a ruthless quest for regional supremacy.

Rights groups have amply documented the cruelty of Saddam, who at an initial court hearing on Oct. 19 pleaded not guilty to charges of crimes against humanity over a Shiite civilian massacre in 1982.

The trial resumes Monday with daily hearings scheduled through Thursday, when prosecution witnesses are likely to be heard.

Saddam, whose name in Arabic means "the stubborn one" or "he who confronts," cut a defiant figure in court last month, refusing to state his name to the judge, questioning the trial's legitimacy, and tussling with guards.

A figure who even today in shackles and under US custody inspires fear, investigative judges refer to Saddam as "Number 1."

The ousted dictator's habit of videotaping all his orders to ensure they were carried out has backfired against him, according to a source close to the investigation. "Everything was filmed."

Future court cases will revolve around his government's links to the killing of tens of thousands of Kurds and savagely crushing a Shiite *intifada* in 1991.

Under Saddam's leadership from 1979 to 2003, the Baath regime ordered army deserters' ears cut off, sentenced foreign currency traffickers to death, and was alleged to have beheaded dozens of women for prostitution.

A former CIA psychologist once described Saddam, now 68, as suffering from "malignant narcissism," which he blamed on his troubled upbringing.

Saddam was born poor in a mud hut village near Tikrit on April 28, 1937, was orphaned at a young age and raised by an uncle who was a fan of Adolf Hitler and a supporter of Nazi ideology.

He overcame his impoverished roots and rose to Iraq's highest office, built the grandest of palaces, married three times and fathered six children.

Saddam's self-importance as historical figure and cult of personality were legendary—on his 60th birthday he commissioned a handwritten copy of the Koran written in his own blood.

He groomed two of his sons, Uday and Qusay, in his image. As adults they quickly became feared for their use of torture and rape rooms. They were killed during a gunbattle with US forces in the northern city of Mosul in July 2003.

Their father first made a name trying to murder Iraqi president Abdul Karim Kassem in 1959.

Wounded in the leg, Saddam fled abroad but returned four years later and was jailed in 1964. Within two years he had escaped and resumed clandestine work for the Baath, a nationalist and socialist party dedicated to bringing about an "Arab rebirth."

In 1968 he took part in the coup which brought the party to power. *AFP*

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Millions in China city to have water again after huge toxic spill

HARBIN, CHINA—The 3.8 million residents of Harbin in China were due to have their water reconnected Sunday, five days after supplies were cut due to a massive toxic spill snaking its way though the city's river.

As the 80-km belt passed the northeastern city on its way downstream to Russia, China made a formal apology to its neighbor for the benzene spill heading towards the Amur river—known in China as the Heilong river—that marks the border between the two.

Some 100 tons of benzene was dumped into the Songhua river, a major tributary of the Amur, on Nov. 13 after a huge explosion at a chemical plant in Jilin province, some 380 km up river from Harbin and 1,000 km from the Russian border.

Public water supplies to Harbin were cut on Tuesday as the government scrambled to bring massive shipments of bottled water into the city to avoid a health crisis.

After more than five days without mains water, residents were expected to have water back before midnight.

Water samples taken in Harbin now show no trace of the chemical, state media quoted local officials as saying Sunday.

"The latest inspection result shows that by 6 a.m. on Sunday no benzene was found in the water at Sifangtai, the water source site in the upper reach of Harbin section," Xinhua news agency said.

"The nitrobenzene level has met the national standard with a concentration of 0.0050 mg/liter," it said, citing Lin Qiang, spokesperson for the Heilongjiang Provincial Environmental Protection Bureau.

Premier Wen Jiabao, who arrived in Harbin Saturday, ordered officials to begin directing their attention toward the lower reaches of the Songhua river where the toxic slick was heading.

He insisted that pollution levels should be promptly and publicly reported.

"Local governments must follow the polluted waters through the cities, towns and villages along the river and make prompt public reports on the monitoring results," Wen was quoted by the Heilongjiang Morning Post as telling officials.

"Every available measure must be taken to ensure the drinking needs of the people and the quality of the water."

Following the Nov. 13 chemical blast at a PetroChina benzene plant, officials in Jilin province covered up the water pollution disaster for 10 days.

The calamity has been widely seen as a reflection of China's increasingly dismal environmental situation, which has been largely ignored during 25 years of fast-paced economic growth.

Despite panic buying of water and food supplies in Harbin last weekend, the city has responded to the crisis rather calmly, with the government reporting zero cases of benzene poisoning and no pollution-related fatalities.

Wen further ordered officials in Heilongjiang province to report on river monitoring efforts to their Russian neighbors.

"We must strengthen our cooperation and contacts with Russia in a friendly and responsible way and give them reports on the monitoring efforts," he said.

On Saturday in Beijing, Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing informed Russian Ambassador Sergei Razov about the pollution situation along the river and expressed regret over possible harm to the Russian people.

The slick was expected to reach Russia within days.

President Vladimir Putin's envoy to the Far East, Kamil Iskhakov, told regional media outlets Saturday that there was no reason for residents living along the Amur river to panic.

"We will know at least a week before the chemical spill reaches Khabarovsk," a city of 650,000 people, Iskhakov said.

Despite its booming economy and rising living standards, China is facing a water crisis due to severe shortages caused by heavy pollution, which will only worsen if drastic measures are not taken.

China was "facing a water crisis more severe and urgent than any other country in the world," Vice Minister of Construction Qiu Baoxing said earlier this month before the benzene spill.

"We've got to solve the problem before it is too late," warned Qiu. *AFP*

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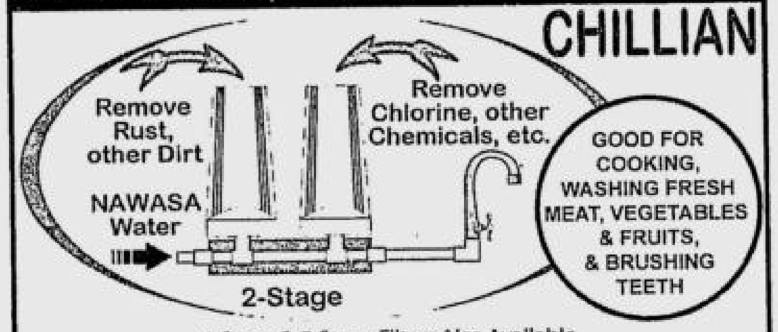
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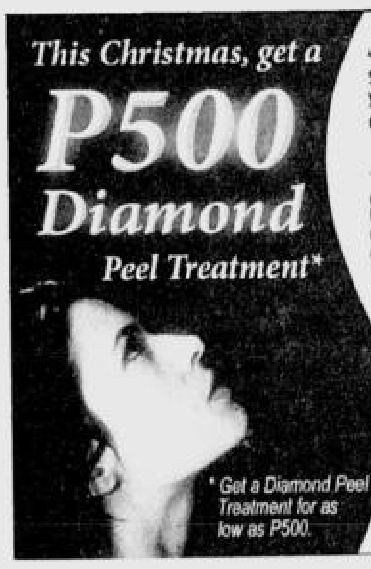

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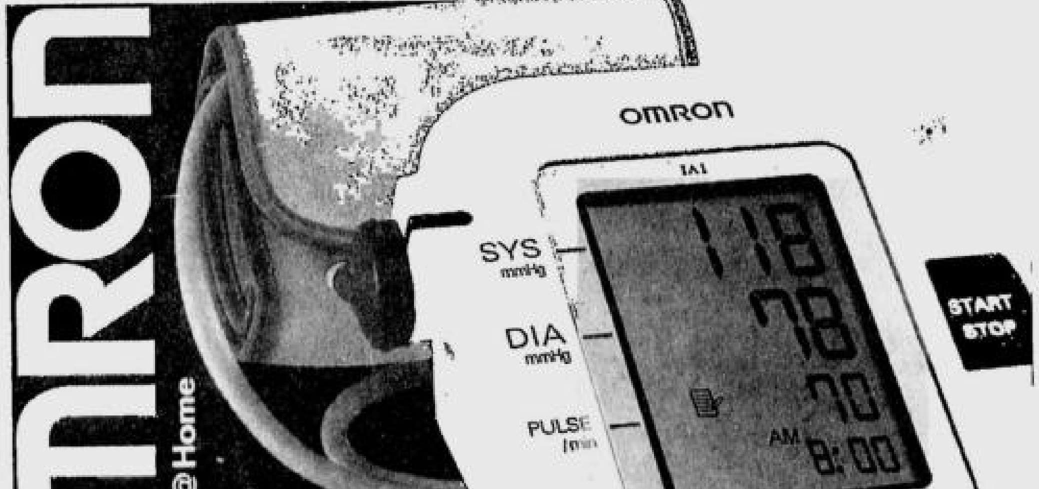

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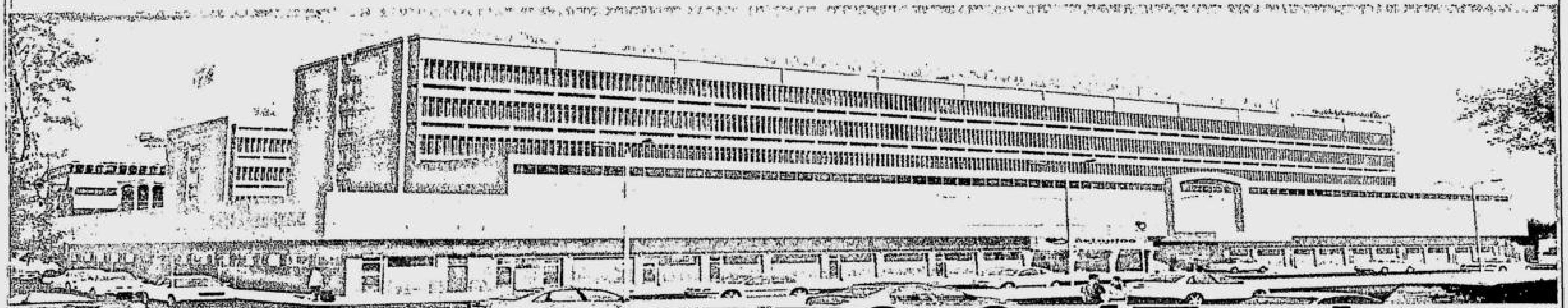

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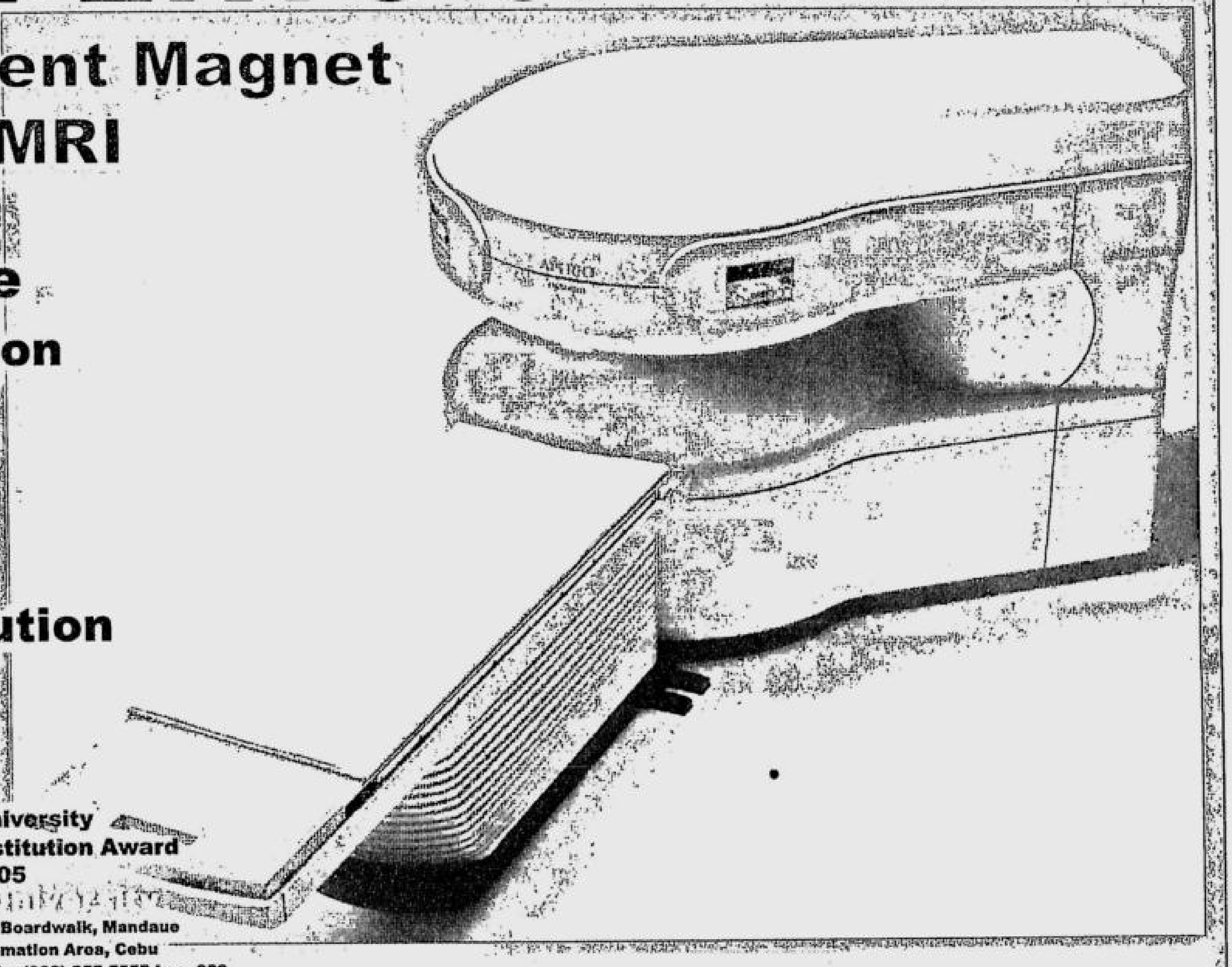

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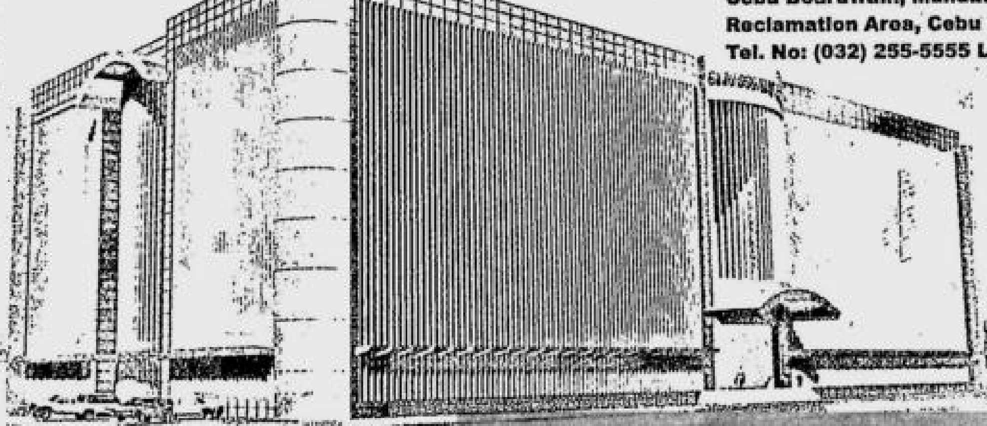

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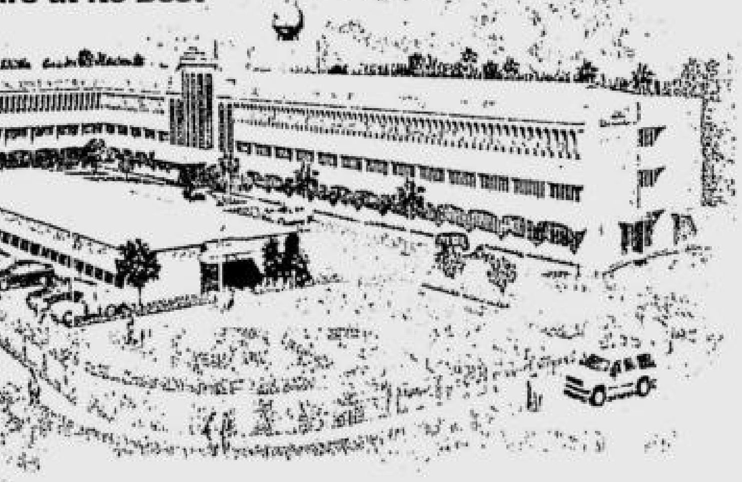

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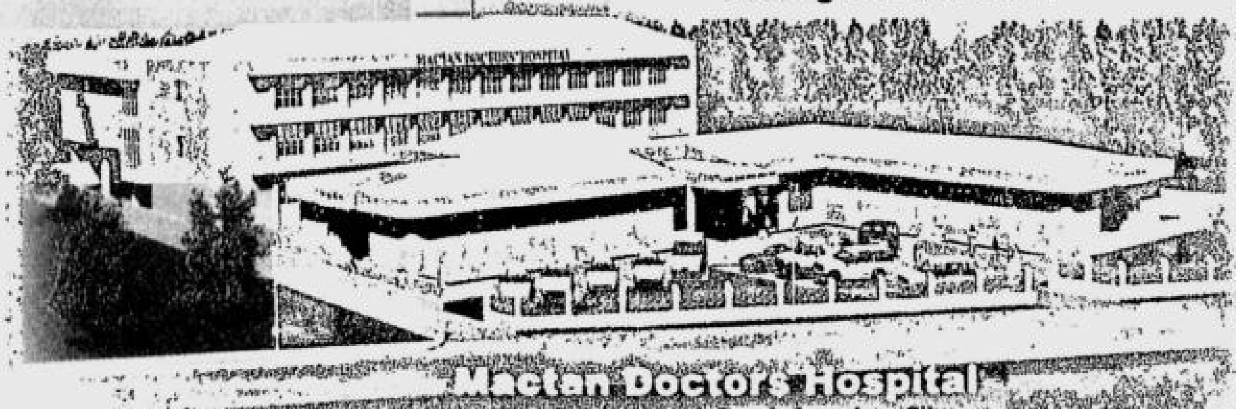

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A MAN clears snow from the walkway in the southern city of Beek, Netherlands, Nov. 26. An early winter cold spell brought heavy snowfall to parts of Europe over the weekend, paralyzing public transport and roadways. AP

Winter freeze hits Europe, suspends flights, cuts power

PARIS/BERLIN—A SUDDEN WINTER FREEZE gripped parts of northern Europe on Saturday with heavy snowfalls cutting power, canceling football matches and spreading air and road traffic chaos.

In Paris, the Eiffel Tower was shut for most of Saturday as ice made its staircases treacherous, while heavy snowfalls meant thousands of people in France and Germany faced plummeting temperatures without electricity.

"We hope power will be restored tonight. Our teams are out there working on it," a spokesperson for Electricite de France said. Some 7,000 homes out of 17,000 that suffered power failures in France's western Vendee region overnight were still without electricity by nightfall on Saturday, she added.

A quarter of a million people were also without electricity in Germany's most populous state of North-Rhine Westphalia (NRW), authorities there said on Saturday.

Soccer fans in the Belgian city of Liege were disappointed when a keenly awaited clash between Anderlecht and Standard, two giants of the premier division, was postponed because of the cold. A German league match between MSV Duisburg and Cologne was also postponed because of heavy snow.

Air traffic also suffered from the snow and ice. Flights in and out of airports in Paris, Brussels and the north German city of Duesseldorf, the NRW state capital, were all affected.

A Duesseldorf airport spokesperson said 36 flights had to be redirected and 25 were canceled. "I have been working at the airport for 11 years and I cannot remember something like this ever happening before," spokesperson Torsten Hiermann said.

Brussels airport said it too had experienced cancellations and delays, while a spokesperson for France's Aeroports de Paris said 23 flights from Charles de Gaulle airport were grounded.

"It's mostly because of snow on the runways," he said.

The Paris region saw about 5 cm of snow and in northwest France there was up to 10 cm. The climatic conditions also threw the northern half of Spain under a bad weather alert, and closed several mountain passes.

Officials said the real danger, however, was extreme cold.

The French government declared a level two state of alert—decreed when daytime temperatures remain negative and sink to between -5 and -10 degrees Celsius at night—under its so-called Winter Plan to protect the homeless, for just over a third of the country.

That came after two homeless people died in France during the past 48 hours due to the intense cold. *Reuters*

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NEED TO
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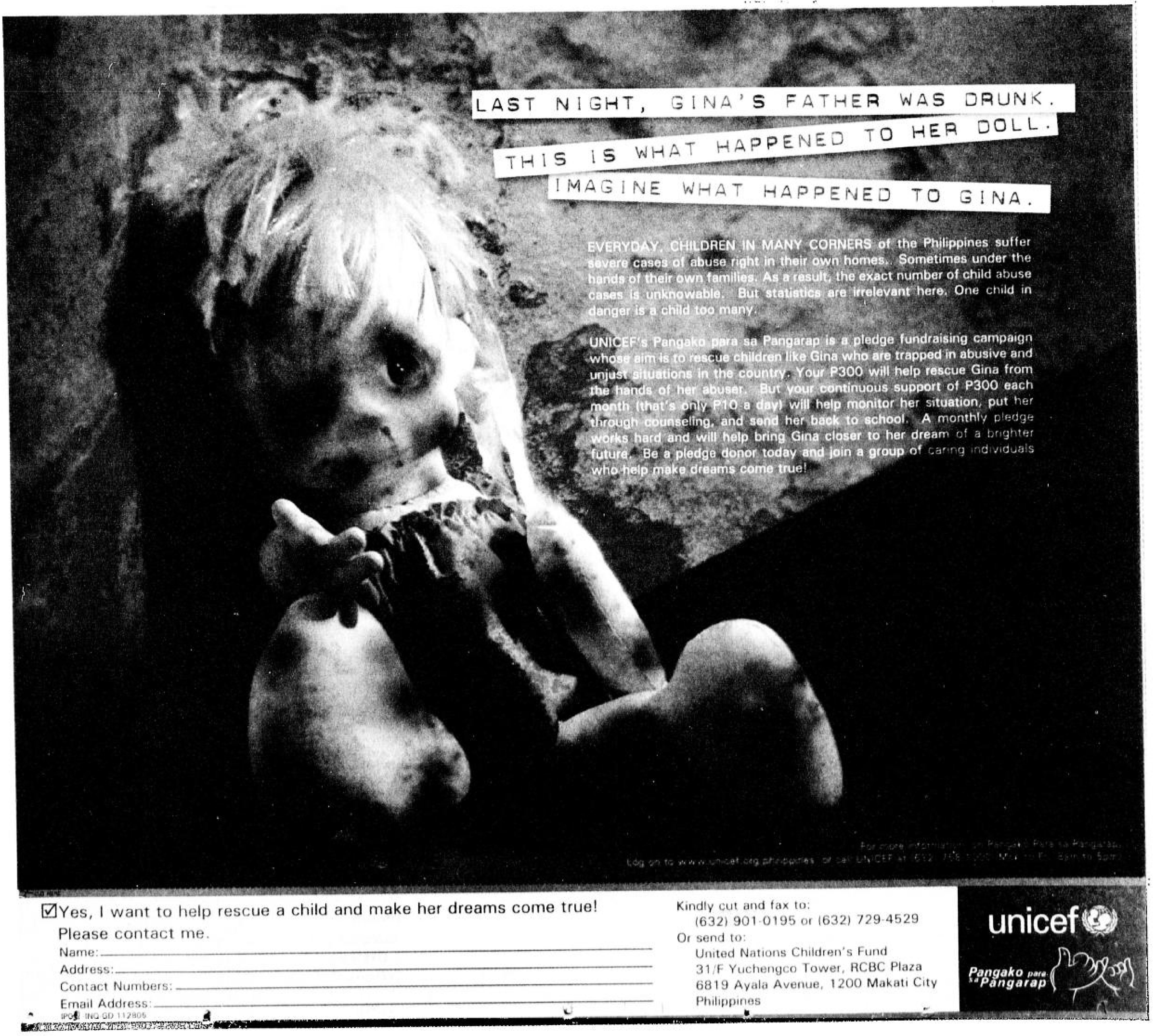

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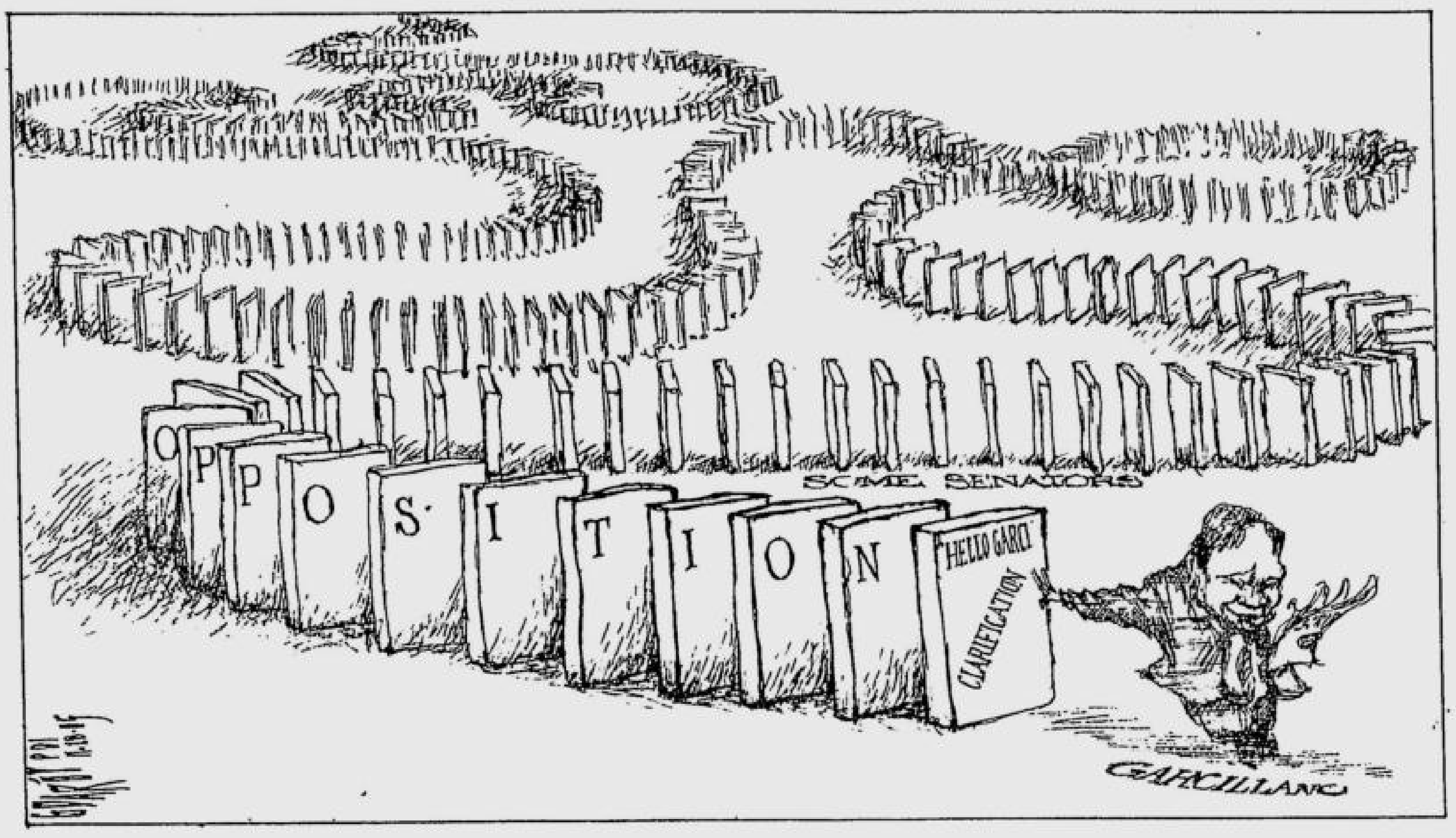

Triumph of spirit

EDITORIAL

THE LAST TIME THE PHILIPPINES HOSTED the Southeast Asian Games, in 1991, the country was suffering through a season of self-doubt. The effects of the December 1989 coup attempt—the most devastating of the many attempts at a military takeover since the fall of the dictatorship—continued to weigh down on the economy. The debate over the closing of the US bases continued to cast a pall on the country's diplomatic, military and trade relations with the United States. The turmoil over the landmark Generics Act and the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program revealed the deep social fissures that continued (and still continue) to divide the country. Not least, the infamous power shortages that eventually blackened the map had started to sap an anxious people's resolve.

And then for the first time since the SEA Games started in 1959, the country came within one magical gold medal of winning the overall championship. As the gold medals accumulated with each passing day, the country's attention was drawn to the medal tally. Public support for the country's athletes reached new heights, and a spirit of optimism, nurtured on a can-do attitude and a sense that every Filipino, regardless of political persuasion, was pulling in the same direction, seemed to hover in the chilly December air.

The euphoria, of course, did not last.

But the shortlivedness of that experience has not stopped the current administration from hoping for a repeat. From the President on down, government officials can use a welcome respite from the sordidness of politics, Philippine style. In fact, the SEA Games may be one reason why the controversial ex-election commissioner, Virgilio Garcillano, chose this time to climb above ground.

President Macapagal-Arroyo told sports editors she invited to Malacañang: "Let's concentrate on the athletes, *huwag iyong sa away* (not on bickering). I've invited the opposition to even watch the opening (Sunday). Sports, as you know, is a unifying element in society."

Her spokesperson, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, expanded on the theme: "The SEA Games should ignite the passion of all Filipinos to rally behind our athletes and our nation and carry the torch of unity throughout the land by setting aside our differences and work towards the betterment of our society."

The administration's eagerness to use the SEA Games to push national unity is, well, transparent. Its mantra, after the Hello Garci tapes came out, and after the impeachment bid failed in Congress, has always been: Move on. Set aside our differences and move on.

But it would be churlish of us, and short-sighted of anyone, to begrudge the administration the very opportunity to appeal for national unity. We must, after all, rally behind our athletes. And it is still the administration's responsibility, beyond a doubt, to call on the public to support the athletes carrying our colors.

But the administration is mistaken if it thinks public interest in the Games, along with the national euphoria in the event we duplicate our feat in 1991, excuses it from explaining, in full, Garcillano's role in last year's elections. Or accounting, in full, for the other scandals and controversies that have undermined its capacity for governance.

So let us all celebrate the Games. Let us follow the progress of our national athletes, many of whom have endured unimaginable sacrifices to be able to compete in the country's name. Let us watch the events in the different venues, rooting for the home team while always showing a sincere courtesy to all visiting teams. Let us cheer for the underdog, whether he carries our flag or some other country's, because he personifies the triumph of the human spirit. Let us applaud the truly exceptional athletes, whether they carry our flag or some other country's, because their story of achievement and excellence is our story too. Let us support the Games, bearing with the additional volume of traffic, helping keep the streets and the venues clean, extending our brand of hospitality to participant and spectator alike. Not least, let us hold firmly to our oar, and all pull in the same direction. The glory our athletes will earn belongs, not to anyone in particular, but to all of us.

But will the people believe Garci?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE NATION IS AGOG OVER THE EXPECTED resurrection of Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano. Of course, he is the one who disappeared after he was caught on tape talking with President Macapagal-Arroyo supposedly in a plot to cheat in the elections. Now he has sent word that he is ready to tell all, and his *palabas* is eagerly being awaited by the people, the same way they awaited the movie sequels "The Return of Zorro," "The Lone Ranger Rides Again" and "Batman Returns." The Palace and its allies are happily preparing for his return like it is the Second Coming because he has threatened to name opposition leaders who also "called him during the elections." The threat is supposedly meant to blackmail the opposition into shutting up on the Garci tapes?

Even before he shows up, Garci is already making a mockery of the House of Representatives (in fact, he and National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales are making a mockery of the whole Congress) by making all sorts of demands. "Lift the P1 million bounty on my head. Lift my arrest warrant!" he demanded. (He even told the press the sort of coverage he wants for himself.) As if it were a dog obeying the command of the master, the House promptly granted both demands.

As for Gonzales, he is still in contempt of the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee chaired by Sen. Joker Arroyo for refusing to answer questions on the Venable contract that he signed. First, he feigned illness so that he would be confined at the Heart Center instead of in the Senate; then he asked for a "medical leave" so that he would be set free temporarily while still undecided on having a "heart bypass operation." Then he returned to work at the National Security Office without answering the senators' questions on the Venable contract. And the contempt citation and the questions were forgotten by the senators, especially Senator Arroyo, as though they were suddenly stricken with amnesia. Not a peep out of them.

What I'm driving at is that Congress is slowly losing respect and credibility as the executive branch slowly chips away at its authority. Besides, there are Executive Order No. 464 which was issued by the President and directs officials and employees not to testify at congressional hearings; the Calibrated Preemptive Response (CPR) policy on street protests; and the order preventing military officers from testifying on poll cheating.

This is a pity because Congress is the only co-equal branch of government left. The Supreme Court is now perceived to be too timid to cross the President it helped put in office. All these affronts and insults Congress is taking without fighting back, as if taking cue from the notorious advice of Sen. Raul Manglapus to women about to be raped. (Pardon the comparison.)

During his long absence, Garci obviously had time to concoct his story (or his handlers had time to coach him), and now he is ready with it. He is expected to deny there was any cheating for Ate Glue despite the evidence of the tapes (which is why Malacañang is very happy over his reappearance) and to name opposition leaders who also called him during the polls.

But will the people believe him? Flight is presumed to be an admission of guilt and Garci already condemned himself when he refused to answer questions on the Garci tapes and went into hiding instead.

"Garci's story" is obviously calculated to bring closure to the issue of Ate Glue's legitimacy. But it will just be Garci's word against the evidence and the testimony of other witnesses. And for as long as there are questions that remain unanswered, there will be no closure to the controversy.

The only way to answer the questions of whether or not there was cheating in the 2004 presidential election and who really won in the polls, is to recount the votes. This is what Ate Glue's allies doggedly prevented in the canvassing of votes by Congress, in the election protest in the Presidential Electoral Tribunal and in the impeachment case. And that is the principal issue against Ate Glue, and the root of all her problems: She did not win in the polls and therefore she is a bogus President. To be accepted as President, she must first of all show that she really won "fair and square."

This should not be difficult to do, if the PET will only cooperate and exercise "judicial statesmanship"—as Fr. Joaquin Bernas has suggested—for the sake of the nation. The PET will recount the votes for vice president because of the election protest of opposition candidate Loren Legarda against Vice President Noli de Castro. The votes for president are written on the same election returns containing the tally of votes for vice president. It will therefore take no more than a few seconds to look at the votes for president and tally them. If these are recounted as well in the recount of Legarda's and De Castro's votes, then we will also know, without a doubt, the total number of votes garnered by the presidential candidates.

If it shows that Ate Glue got more votes than Fernando Poe Jr., then her woes are over. The people will accept her as their president.

Without any certainty as to her legitimacy, however, the pressure for her to step down will go on and on, regardless of what Garci says in his drama.

* * *

TODAY'S JOKE: There is an explanation to the sudden reappearance of Garci just as the SEA Games opens. Garci will be the official scorer in the games. That way, we will win in all the events.

Crossroads

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

WHY HAS VIRGILIO GARCILLANO MATERIALIZED at this time after being in hiding for a few months?

Well, the only thing we can be certain of, amid the rumors and speculations, is that if the fellow is truly poised to make a grand entrance, it can only be with Malacañang's blessings. He could not have disappeared without Malacañang's help, and he cannot reappear without Malacañang's help. That the most wanted man in all of the country should have given the authorities the slip, despite their vaunted claims of having the country sewn up such that no terrorist could sneak in and out without their knowing it, is about as believable as Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo being the President. What bigger terrorist is there than Garci? He hasn't just been terrorizing the voters, he has been terrorizing the English language. If he's back, there must be a script.

I can imagine a couple of reasons for the timing. The most obvious is that Malacañang means to ram through our throats a closure to the "Hello Garci" episode in response to Archbishop Angel Lagdameo's call for it. Lagdameo is the new CBCP president, and, unlike his predecessor Fernando Capalla (who presumed to be a shepherd while being more lost than his flock), can still distinguish light from dark, angel from demon, good from bad. GMA means to remove the Damocles sword called Garci hanging on her head—and preempt the Church from rediscovering moral outrage—by the same tack she removed the initiative to impeach her: by muscling through with legal technicality.

With December being just round the corner, she probably also figures she can count on the public to be even more apathetic—no one wants to talk politics on Christmas—or at least to be more forgiving. Then later she can say, as with the impeachment trial, that she has sent the issue through the legal grind, we may now close the book on it.

Prospero Pichay, who has gotten prosperous by causing the public mind to vegetate—my apologies to vegetables—with the kind of thinking he regales it with, has already given us a preview of the official tack on this. He has been all over the radio stations dredging up his old arguments. Among them: there's nothing wrong with GMA calling Garci during the elections, and the cheating, even if it happened, did not affect the outcome of the elections. If Ping Lacson is to be believed, Garci is also all set to name opposition candidates who called him up during the elections to ask for favors.

This is the last straw, this is the last stand. We allow GMA—and Garci—to get away with this, we're hopeless idiots and truly deserve only to be scattered by the winds to the four corners of the earth. We let this pass in the name of Christmas, moving on, and thinking upbeat, we do not deserve to be called a nation. Or we deserve only to be called a nation of fools. We've reached a crossroads where we must choose between good and evil. And the choice cannot be put in a starker way.

On one side, we can agree with GMA, Garci and Pichay, and say that indeed precious few of the things we cherished now mean anything to us, or should mean anything to us. There is nothing wrong with an incumbent President and candidate calling up a Comelec official in the dead of night, or the blaze of counting, to talk about the vote. There is nothing wrong with that same Comelec commissioner being spirited away while a storm of protest swirls around him, and turned from oppressor to victim afterward. There is nothing wrong with the presidential seal being changed from Republic of the Philippines to Republic of the Philistines, because we have more important things to bother with.

We can agree with GMA, Garci and Pichay and say, down the road, there is nothing wrong with rape so long as you do not murder the victim. There is nothing wrong with murder so long as you do not slaughter the rest of the victim's family. There is nothing wrong with slaughter so long as you do not make it a habit. We can agree with GMA, Garci and Pichay and keep lowering standards or pushing back the limits of the acceptable till iniquity is rife and rottenness the order of the day. No, more than that till we make right wrong and wrong right, light dark and dark light, and call the march of death the riot of life.

Or we can damn all this from the pit of our souls, and say "Enough!" Enough of rolling in the mud like pigs for so long, it's time we stood up and became human beings again. Enough of taking in every rot and stink and slime, it's time we rose up to our full height and breathed the air of free men once again. Enough of using the law to foment lawlessness, it's time we said calling up a Comelec official during the counting of votes is wrong, calling it a "lapse in judgment" is wrong, cheating is wrong.

The opposition candidates called up Garci too? Then by all means let us arrest them too and prosecute them too and, where we find them guilty, punish them too. Why should the allegation that opposition candidates called up Garci to jack up their votes justify the fact that GMA called up Garci to jack up her votes? Being able to point to another person as having committed rape does not justify rape. Being able to point to another person as having murdered does not justify murder. Two wrongs do not make a right, they make a deeper wrong. A shared crime does not make two people commonly innocent, it makes them equally guilty.

The crossroads is there before us, and how we choose over the next couple of weeks will determine the future of this nation and the fate of our children. We can choose decency or we can choose depravity. We can choose freedom or we can choose slavery. We can choose life or we can choose death.

We say hello to Garci, we say hello to death.

A constituent assembly?

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

REPORTS HAVE IT THAT THE HOUSE OF REPresentatives is all set to approve a resolution calling for Congress to meet in joint session, to act as a constituent assembly for the purpose of proposing changes to the Constitution. Whether the reports are accurate or not, four questions are worth discussing.

First, is such a resolution necessary in order to set the ball rolling for revising the Constitution? Second, if the House should actually pass such a resolution, what options would the Senate have for responding to it? Third, if no joint resolution is approved, may Congress still propose changes? Fourth, if the two houses decide to propose amendments without a joint session, how can they do it?

Under the text of the 1935 Constitution such a joint resolution was necessary. The Constitution then said: "The Congress in joint session assembled ... may propose amendments to the Constitution ..." Thus, since only a joint session could propose amendments, it was necessary for Congress to pass a joint resolution, through which both Houses agreed to come together. Without such a resolution neither House could get started on amending the Constitution.

That, however, is no longer the language of the current Constitution. Now the text simply says "Any amendment to, or revision of, this Constitution may be proposed by ... the Congress ..." What this means is that Congress is already a constituent assembly able to propose amendments or revision. No call for a joint session is needed.

Since Congress is already a constituent assembly even if not in joint session, there is no obligation on the part of the Senate to heed the call of the House of Representatives for a joint session. But the Senate, if it so desires, may heed the call and agree to a joint session. There may be advantages to a joint session because it can lead to a mutual enrichment of ideas. But some might say that an invitation coming from the House for a joint session might be like the invitation in a limerick saying, "Will you come into my parlor, said the spider to the fly." And we know what happened to the fly. At any rate, a joint session is not necessary.

Whether joint or separated, Congress is a legislative assembly empowered to enact laws. So also whether joint or separated, Congress is already a constituent assembly empowered to propose amendments or revision to the Constitution. But the empowerment is given to Congress, a bicameral body. Hence, whether joint or separated, both Houses must play an autonomous role; however, neither House can ignore the other. But how is this to be done if they are not in joint session?

If the two houses do not come together in joint session, the procedure for proposing amendments or revision (if it is to go in an orderly fashion) will have to follow something like the procedure for enacting laws. The two Houses do not come together to enact laws. They do their thing as they are where they are.

The same system can be followed for constitutional changes. The House of Representatives approves a "revision bill" or a "bullet amendment" and passes it on to the Senate for consideration. If both chambers approve an identical text, then the text is ready for proposal to the electorate in a referendum. If the approved texts do not match, differences can be resolved in a bicameral conference committee as is done in the legislative process. However, since there are no existing rules of procedure for constitutional revision, Congress will have to devise the rules.

All this assumes that the amendments or revision will be proposed by Congress and not by a constitutional convention. Moreover, all of this song and dance have become necessary because the present text on amendment and revision does not have the clarity of the 1935 text. Why is this so?

Blaming it on the 1986 Constitutional Commission will not solve problems. The fact is, when the present formula was approved, the Constitutional Commission was still thinking in terms of a unicameral legislative body. Thus, the text is almost a verbatim copy of the text of the 1973 Constitution for a unicameral Batasang Pambansa. In the rush, it was not adjusted to the ultimate decision to have a bicameral Congress.

That does not mean, however, that the current text must be read as if Congress were unicameral, which it is not. It must be read as a guide for a bicameral body. And I suggest that the procedure I have outlined is a legitimate bicameral reading of the current text.

Incidentally, even if Congress decides not to act as constituent assembly and decides instead to call a constitutional convention, we still will have to deal with the same unclear text. The Constitution now simply says: "The Congress may, by a vote of two-thirds of all its Members, call a Constitutional Convention, or by a majority vote of all its Members, submit to the electorate the question of calling such a convention." Even here Congress must act as a bicameral body.

This brings me to a prior question: Should it be Congress or a constitutional convention? My thinking on this subject is simple. I do not anticipate that, under the present electoral system, an elected constitutional convention, in terms of quality, will be better or worse than the Congress we presently have. Or for that matter, will it necessarily be better than the Constitutional Commission which drafted the 1987 Constitution. The delegates will be drawn from the same milieu whence current legislators came and will be chosen through the same flawed electoral process.

The other side of peace

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Noralyn Mustafa

FOR THE PAST SEVERAL NIGHTS, SINCE THE outbreak of a new round of skirmishes between elements of the Misuari MNLF faction and the Abu Sayyaf on one hand, and government forces on the other, we in Jolo have been kept awake by spy planes cruising above us. In the daytime, helicopters bomb and strafe specified targets, and howitzers fire and shake the ground.

Hundreds of residents in the affected areas are now in evacuation centers, schools have been deserted, crops destroyed, and lives traumatized.

As it has been since the 1970s and, probably, as ever shall be.

If there is anything that this latest round of hostilities tells us, it is that peace-making is much, much more than negotiation tables in five-star hotels here and abroad, or free tickets to the Southeast Asian Games.

As many observers have been saying from the time the followers of former ARMM Gov. Nur Misuari attacked military and police installations in 2001 (resulting in over 100 people dead), the 1996 GRP-MNLF Peace Agreement is a failure.

The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) itself, the realization of the intent of the peace accord, has since its creation been said to be a failure.

The MNLF and its sympathizers have repeatedly blamed the government for its failure (or refusal) to "fully implement" the peace accord. The government, on the other hand, has been hard put trying to make the various sets of ARMM officials explain where their allocations went.

The peace agreement was supposed to bring, finally, a just and lasting peace to the region, to realize the yearnings of the Muslim populace for some degree of self-determination and for better lives.

But what the people have seen instead is a heartbreaking and hopeless tale of corruption, nepotism and incompetence that has made their lives more miserable.

Only yesterday, a group of government employees was having their Cola (cost-of-living-allowance) claim forms notarized, desperately hoping that they would finally receive their Colas, which have been denied them since 1989. But at the same time, they were wondering—considering their experiences with the bureaucratic "complexities" in the ARMM—whether these would get to them at all.

Teachers have received their October salary, but the September pay is nowhere to be found. Before that, salaries, already meager, would be delayed by as long as three months, forcing them to "sell" their expected checks to loan sharks. What happened to their GSIS premium payments is a story almost too incredible to believe.

The sorry scheme of things, the periodic disruption of classes, the trauma from the bombings, mortar shellings and resultant dislocations have taken their toll on the quality of education in Sulu and other parts of the autonomous region.

Morale in the bureaucracy is at an all-time low. Office premises are in poor condition; equipment, if there are any, are in a state of disrepair; supplies are scant; communication facilities are often non-existent.

In many places in the countryside, the so-called integrees, the beneficiaries of a program intended to integrate former MNLF combatants into the Armed Forces of the Philippines, are the new elite. Authorized to bear arms issued by the government, they are the figures of authority and power in their own communities, able to create another level of oppression and disenfranchisement of the powerless.

The ARMM, for many, is but an unnecessary and expensive layer of bureaucracy that has done almost nothing to alleviate the social and economic conditions of the Bangsamoro.

What went wrong?

Much of the blame has been placed on former President Corazon Aquino, for having "resurrected" Nur Misuari; and on former President Fidel Ramos, who forged the peace agreement with the MNLF.

Although both past presidents share some responsibility for the present state of affairs in the autonomous region in Mindanao, it would be unfair to put the blame on them entirely. Even before Misuari set foot again in the country, even before the peace agreement was signed, the regional autonomous government was already corrupt.

Could it be some tragic cultural flaw in the Bangsamoro? Why is it that leadership is still set in the mold of the warlord and the politically powerful? Why do the Moro people's leaders, without any sense of accountability, consider government positions a sinecure to be taken advantage of to the utmost?

The implications of these questions are much more complicated than they seem.

Still, running like a common thread through all the effort to "pacify" the Moro (from the Marcos regime to the present administration) is the eagerness of the government to obtain peace at all costs—at the expense of the common people, that is.

It is the kind of peace settlement that is intended to buy time and a semblance of peace for whatever administration is involved in the peace negotiations. As it has always been, the government considers the Bangsamoro a pesky and bothersome reality that it has to deal with, the earlier and easier, the better.

The tragic result is an almost total absence of long-term, sustainable programs for development; and the emergence of policies that change from administration to administration, containing nothing that lifts up or empowers the marginalized.

It is, in short, and—as we have stated many times before—just a policy of appeasement founded on the insincerity and hypocrisy of both sides.

It is a policy as pretentious and as ridiculous as an all-expenses-paid trip and free tickets to the SEA Games.

Sadly for the Moro people, in an administration that is too eager to show its total devotion to the Bush-led war on terror and to arrest and jail anybody with a Moro-sounding name, it is definitely not showtime.

* * *

Comments to rubaiyat19@yahoo.com

Of heroism and hubris

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

ANDRES BONIFACIO WAS AN AUTODIDACT, A revolutionary and a tragic hero. His incendiary patriotism continues to serve as a warning against tyranny in all its forms, whether institutional or carried out in the name of change.

His life has undergone close scrutiny in recent years, pitting scholars against scholars, and his admirers against his detractors. Little remains of his life that has not been the subject of controversy and the object of invective. Yet, he continues to be admired and held in deepest affection by Filipinos from all walks of life.

As well he should. He was one of the most able organizers our nation has ever produced; for a time, he was able to unite Filipinos under a common aspiration, a united agenda—freedom. Not just that: he also provided the will to assert it, and the prudence to plan the best way to achieve it under difficult circumstances. What pulsed through his veins was red-hot patriotism the likes of which have seldom been seen and equaled—and, yes, are sorely missed today—in our country. The shortcomings of men and women fade when their love for their country and people burns so bright.

A self-made man (the sort of individual the majority of working men and women can identify with today), who found work in his time's equivalent of today's multinational corporations, Bonifacio tried the path of reform, joining Jose Rizal's La Liga Filipina. Eventually he saw that the nation whose birth he so dearly sought couldn't be ushered into this world unless an extreme measure—revolution—was adopted.

His greatest misfortune befell upon him because a compatriot betrayed the existence of the secret society he headed—a society so skillfully nurtured and extended that the Spanish could only suspect its existence but could never find definitive proof of it, until it was exposed. That hideous act started a tradition of cowardice and betrayal and left the Katipunan two options: to fight or to meekly submit to extermination. Submit it could not, as Rizal was willing to do, and as his spiritual heirs—Jose Abad Santos, Ninoy Aquino—later did. A movement cannot commit suicide, for there is no nobility in the immolation of a group. The Katipunan had to fight, vowing revenge for Rizal's death, just as the guerrillas, generations down the line, would fight against the Japanese.

Reform has always been stalked by revolution; the two are, more often than not, inseparable companions. Without the threat of revolution, the cause of reform loses impetus; without the promise of reform, a revolution becomes inevitable.

So it was with the Propagandists, who used their intellect to stave off what they feared most—a revolution that promised freedom at the expense of all that they cherished. And so it was and thereafter—after the brutal American war of conquest against Filipinos, and the resumption of the independence campaign that saw autonomy and then limited independence achieved—that the fiery specter of revolt has always hung heavy in the air, descending upon the nation from time to time as a reminder that the only alternative to reform is bloodshed.

Of Bonifacio, the truism that Revolutions eventually devour their children—or fathers—is often pointed out. Each leader has his day; and when the floodgates of tyranny's ramparts are flung open, the surging tides of liberation wreak destruction in their wake. That is why, since independence, we have always faced the challenge to keep the waters of society relatively calm. The Supremo was eventually removed from power by his fellow revolutionaries, and ended up uncannily like Robespierre—bloodied, vilified, ignominiously executed. The way his personal authority and triumphs of leadership ended should make us pause and think today.

His detractors say that he suffered from megalomania, though it is probably more accurate to say that his former lieutenants succumbed to the disease of jealousy. A man can only be hailed as a conquering hero for so long; eventually, should adversity strike, yesterday's adoring supporters can be transformed into today's mob, howling for retribution.

Our leaders must remember this. To be greeted with marching bands and sycophantic banners everywhere they go, to be surrounded at all times by people eager to cater to their every whim, to be met with respect by their peers in this country and abroad; all this can lead to the illusion of glorious destiny, a fate unprecedented in history.

To believe this is wrong. To be hailed as a latter-day *hari ng bayan* is no guarantee that a leader would not end up in the way so many faceless men and women died in the past—on bended knees, in tears, begging for life—by the hand of their fellow citizens drunk with the power that comes with the gun and uniform. Today's "father of the nation" can be tomorrow's despised tyrant.

This not to say that those who believe they can lead should spurn the call to be of service to their country. This only leaves the road wide open to opportunists, like Ferdinand Marcos who proclaimed that the road to greatness was the road to anonymity, so that his aspirations to domination would be unopposed. What we believe is that those who are called to be leaders must remember that their mandate must come from their fellow men, who always reserve the right to reduce their leaders to obscurity from whence they came; and that the only time a nation remembers the efforts of its leaders is when it has become convinced that they, first and foremost, had reserved their affections for those who had no power. That is why we remember Bonifacio: he fought to enable us, his fellow Filipinos, the power to rule ourselves (through leaders coming from our own), and—as we have done during elections and revolutions—to rule our leaders.

* * *

Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph/blog

Biggest megacity

COMMENTARY

Belinda A. Aquino

TOKYO—MEGACITIES ARE STEREOTYPED AS FILTHY, UGly and downright depressing. New York, Los Angeles, Cairo, Tokyo, Shanghai, Mexico, Sao Paulo, Seoul, Bangkok, Jakarta, Manila. These are only a few of the world's megacities where you find it hard to breathe, let alone enjoy your usually brief visit. The typical advice of people is to get out of these "hell-holes" as fast as you can.

But it's really all a matter of perspective. The late author Oliver Statler, whose classic "Japanese Inn" is a must reading for any introductory course on Japan, was often asked by visitors: "Where can I find the real Japan?" The visitors usually had in mind, Statler said, the "idyllic thatch-farm houses set in verdant paddy fields." The rural, serene, feudal Japan. That's the "real Japan" in people's imagination. But Statler would always answer: "Tokyo. Today, Tokyo is the real Japan." Above all, Statler would add, Tokyo is exciting; it's never dull. Its "giddy" architecture combines the "outrageously vulgar" and the "outrageously fantastic."

Incidentally, to make this reality more vivid, the Tokyo-Yokohama area is the biggest metropolitan region in the world with a combined population of over 33 million. It outstrips New York, which comes second with around 20 million people.

Because I have been to Tokyo more than once and certainly know what to avoid—like the Shinjuku station, where easily more than 2 million souls pass through its doors every day—I agree with Statler's insights about this city. There are no more small thatch-roof constructions and, certainly, no more verdant rice fields blowing in the wind. But there's always one more oasis you haven't discovered amid all the grand vistas of buildings and technology that make up Tokyo today. One more evidence that indeed, this is or could be the real Japan.

One such place is the wooded park with a heart-shaped pond and reflecting pool inside the sprawling University of Tokyo (Todai) campus in the Hongo district, about 10 minutes away from Ueno, which is more than a grand central station. Ueno is the gateway to and from the prefectures. Since the 17th century, the single most dominant element in Japanese life has been the pull of the cities and the great migration from the villages from the northeast—Tohoku, for instance.

Todai is the most prestigious of the elite national universities in Japan. It has one of the toughest entrance exams in the world. It's hard to believe that only 60 years ago, with the bombing of Tokyo several months before World War II ended, this entire campus was in shambles. But this wooded park, which looks like the real Japan of old, was spared.

Because our memories of wartime Japan inevitably shift to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we sometimes forget that Tokyo itself was firebombed on March 9-10, 1945, resulting in an estimated casualty of nearly 100,000 dead in one night alone. But this had been overshadowed by the subsequent US atomic attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which preceded the Japanese surrender the following August. Thus, we know all about Hiroshima, but what about Tokyo?

More than 300 B-29 "superfortress" planes dropped half a million incendiary bombs over Tokyo that night in March 1945, turning the city into a "raging fireball." In his description of the Tokyo bombing, AP journalist Joseph Coleman likened it to the German air attack on Guernica during the Spanish Civil War, and the bombing of Chungking by the Japanese themselves in the 1930s as they invaded China. These were early examples of indiscriminate urban air raids—a trend that was greatly expanded in World War II, resulting in the devastation of Tokyo in 1945.

The Tokyo attack was partly aimed at demolishing Japanese morale to force a surrender, as well as to wipe out factories to "choke the economy." The low-flying B-29s, according to Coleman, gave the United States greater range and firepower, which he described in these graphic terms. "The M-69s, which released 100-foot streams of fire upon detonating, sent flames rampaging through densely packed wooden homes. Superheated air created a wind that sucked victims into the flames and fed the twisting infernos. Asphalt boiled in the 1,800-degree heat. With much of the fighting-age male population at the warfront, women and children and the elderly struggled in vain to battle the flames or flee."

Actually, the March 1945 air raid wasn't the first to be directed at Tokyo. The first one was the Doolittle Raid in April 1942, which was undertaken in retaliation for the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor. Sixteen B-25 Mitchells were launched from the USS Hornet against targets including Tokyo and Yokohama. Then with 88 B-29s in November 1944, US planes bombed Tokyo, but only 10 percent of the designated targets were hit. A much more effective bombing campaign launched from the Marianas developed the B-29s at full capacity, which could inflict far greater damage than the previous bombs.

A survivor, Haruyo Nihei, was only a little girl during the Tokyo bombing. She helped build a small museum devoted to the attack called the "Center of the Tokyo Raid and War Damages," which opened in March 2002 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the 1945 Tokyo bombing. "Those images in my mind," Nihei recalled, "can never be erased. I can see myself there, the flames all around me. And I'm running for my life."

The terror of it all was horrific. Of course, a more apocalyptic horror, a thousand times more destructive, was yet to come in the August nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

After the firebombings of Tokyo, people wondered if it could be rebuilt from the ashes more rationally as a "planned city," somewhat like Kyoto or Washington, D.C. It could have, but it never happened, as people swarmed into the city after the war, and Tokyo became an aggregation of small towns and villages once again. About three-fourths of Tokyo's current population are not born here.

It is simply amazing how a city could rise from the rubble of war and devastation to become, however unattractive it looks at times, the biggest megacenter in the world in only one generation.

University of Hawaii professor Belinda A. Aquino is attending a conference on Japan, the Philippines and the United States at the University of Tokyo.

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Media are the only avenue left for expressing legitimate dissent

DEFINITELY, EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT to express his or her opinions on any issue—whether for or against. That makes democracy alive. But now that the public's avenue for expressing outrage through mass demonstrations has been effectively closed by the strong-arm tactics of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and her henchmen, the media—newspapers, radio and television—have been left as the only ground where one can freely express dissent or grievance.

Now she is asking the media to shed themselves of what she calls their "bad boy image." She sees the media as bad because she thinks they do not help build a good public image of herself. She believes that the media are responsible for her embarrassingly dismal ratings in the surveys. Little does she realize that the media are but a mirror which reflects the appearance of the object before it. She is the one responsible for how she looks before the reading or viewing public.

I feel sad to read the reaction of some readers who ask people to stop the *"daldalan"* and concentrate instead on the work that needs to be done. Some of them are even telling people to just forget the controversies and the wrongdoings. Working for the betterment of this nation is well and good, but refraining from acting as a watchdog on the government and criticizing the misdeeds of those who lead us will only aggravate the already grave situation.

Corruption is prevalent enough and politicians on both sides of the fence cannot feign ignorance of the pitiful conditions under which most Filipinos are living. Even then, "fiscalizers" (not necessarily the many equally corrupt and ambitious members of the opposition), have the duty to meticulously examine and criticize government actions, otherwise the powers-that-be will neither have the restraint nor remorse to push on with their machinations. We, readers and members of the general public, should not waver in our resolve to express approval or disapproval of GMA's or her men's actions.

I never believed in communism but I find logic in its appeal to the workers of the world. It calls on them to "not be complacent in the face of rampant corruption and shameless arrogation of power." I therefore appeal to overseas Filipino workers around the world to unite and help our suffering country and countrymen free themselves from the bondage of poverty and win a better future for their children.

—RAMON MAYUGA,
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High wages don't make better teachers

ALLOW ME TO COMMENT ON EDUCATION Assistant Secretary Camillo Miguel Montessa's statement about doubling the teachers' salaries. (PDI, 11/9/05) I really hope our public school teachers (as well as all other professionals) would be paid very high salaries so that the noble teaching profession would attract the best—although high salaries do not necessarily attract the best.

Many teachers deserve very good pay because they are really good. But many others do not deserve what little they receive because they do not know how to teach. It does not follow that if their salaries are raised, they will become better teachers; talent, training, experience and dedication will.

If you come to think of it, many volunteer teachers do their jobs better than the regular ones. Teachers do not turn from bad to excellent by adding several thousand pesos to their paycheck. I think it will only encourage more loan sharks.

I hope a merit system is put in place so that both seniority and skill are separately, financially rewarded. What can be very disappointing is for a teacher with real teaching skills receiving much less than someone with less skills just because the latter is more senior and/or has more titles attached to his/her name. (An MA or even a Ph.D., or lack of such degrees does not necessarily reflect a teacher's ability.) Our teachers need to be substantially rewarded for their performance, not just for their academic credentials.

Yes, please weed out students who do not qualify to become teachers. And yes, please, increase the teachers' salaries. But do not just weed out the undeserving students. Remove the undeserving teachers as well. (Or if still possible, retrain/retool them, no matter the high investment.)

Teachers who do not know how to teach simply multiply their errors a thousandfold. Students who meet them might want to become teachers because the pay is good; and they might even think they do not have to be good at teaching.

—BRO. AMADO S. ANCLA, CFA,
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Brother Eddie's foe used as pawn

OUR CLIENTS, BRO. EDDIE VILLANUEVA and ZOE Broadcasting Network, are constrained to reply to Belinda Olivares-Cunanan's Oct. 8 column.

Contrary to her claim, there was no "judicious determination of facts" prior to the issuance on April 4, 2005 of the arrest warrant against Brother Eddie. No hearings or investigative proceedings were conducted to determine if the issuance of the warrant was justified. In fact, Brother Eddie discovered that a case had been filed in court against him and that a warrant had been issued for his arrest long after April 4.

Contrary to Cunanan's claim, Brother Eddie's motion for reconsideration was filed on May 3, 2005 with the Mandaluyong prosecutor's office, not with the court. That is the same office that later denied his motion and railroaded the finding of probable cause against him. The finding was reported in the media even before Brother Eddie was told about it.

Contrary to Cunanan's claim, the arrangement between ZOE and Benito Araneta was for the turnover of management, programming and marketing of Channel 11 to a joint-venture company that was to be promptly incorporated, not to Araneta's EnterNet. The P15 million paid to Brother Eddie was goodwill money, not part of the consideration for said arrangement. In fact, the commitment of EnterNet was for P100 million. Araneta never paid the balance.

Araneta's claims that Brother Eddie allegedly sold to him the same thing that was sold to Mr. Velez of VTV Corp. and "falsely represented" to him that there was no impediment to ZOE's entering into a contract with EnterNet are false. The 1999 negotiations between Brother Eddie and Velez did not ripen into definitive agreements due to VTV's decision to back out of the deal. Even VTV claims its agreement with ZOE was rescinded. ZOE was thus open to enter into a contract with EnterNet. In the 2001 negotiations of ZOE and EnterNet, Araneta was promptly informed of the foiled deal with VTV. He even conducted a due diligence audit of ZOE and examined documents showing the transaction with VTV. VTV president Eric Domagas, who became Araneta's adviser, confirmed Araneta's prior knowledge of the foiled VTV deal.

Indeed, Araneta cannot say that Brother Eddie fooled him. Araneta and EnterNet were able to actually take over Channel 11's management from June 2001 to July 2002, immensely profiting therefrom by airing CNBC programs and soliciting advertisements. Araneta pocketed all earnings but refused to perform his end of the bargain.

It was Araneta and EnterNet that wronged Brother Eddie and ZOE by not paying P70 million in goodwill money and P122,023,000 in Channel 11 airtime costs. The estafa case aims to politically harass Brother Eddie, a staunch critic of President Macapagal-Arroyo. Araneta, a close cousin of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, is being used as a pawn.

—LORNA PATAJO-KAPUNAN,
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Not to worry about one-year VFA limit

SOME LAWYERS ARE CONCERNED that the Subic multiple rape case allegedly involving six US soldiers is in danger of being dismissed because of paragraph 6, Article V of the Visiting Forces Agreement, which provides that if "the Philippine Judicial proceedings are not completed within one year, the US shall be relieved of any obligations…."

Such fear may not be real.

The VFA agreement speaks of "judicial proceedings." The reported period of 255 days (which covers the hearings that start with the city prosecutor up to the appeal to the justice secretary) given the Department of Justice to complete its preliminary investigation is not part of the judicial proceedings.

The phrase "judicial proceedings" means "hearings and trials" conducted by a court of law which is under the judicial branch of the government.

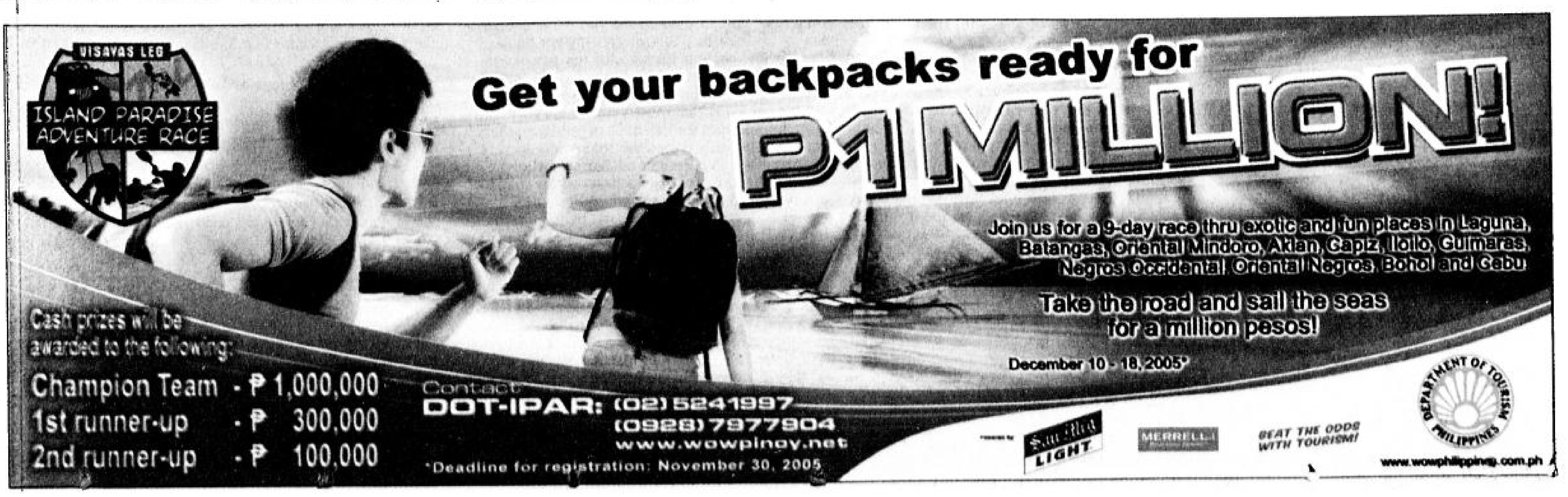
"Preliminary investigations" are administrative hearings done by the DOJ which is under the Office of the President. If the criminal complaints are dismissed by the DOJ, they do not reach the courts for trial.

The one-year period for judicial proceedings will start upon the filing by the public prosecutor of the criminal information in court and when the accused Americans are brought to and arraigned before the court.

No court, conscious of the VFA limitation, will allow this case to go beyond its one-year limit, notwithstanding the efforts of some parties to delay this case.

One year is more than enough time to try and resolve this case.

—LEONARD S. DE VERA,
chair, Equal Justice for All
Movement (EJUST), Penthouse B,
Windsor Tower,
163 Legaspi Street,
Legaspi Village, Makati City



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NorthRail transfers 11,200 families

NHA says it beat deadline set by Vice President

BOCAUE, BULACAN—THE NATIONAL HOUSING Authority has moved out at least 11,200 families from the right-of-way of the NorthRail project in Bulacan, beating the December target set by Vice President Noli de Castro, NHA general manager Federico Laxa said on Sunday.

Laxa said the number of families already relocated represented 96 percent of the number of households living along the tracks of the Philippine National Railway Corp. in Bulacan.

The families have been transferred to six relocation sites in the towns of Meycauayan, Marilao, Bocaue, Balagtas and Guiguinto and Malolos City since October.

The resettlement areas in Bulacan cover 78 hectares and are developed by private companies under the government's P6-billion relocation program for the 40,505 families along the PNRC's route in Metro Manila, Bulacan and Pampanga.

China loan

The project's first phase, which China has funded with a $400-million loan, stretches 32.14 kilometers from Caloocan to Bulacan. The second phase's 58-km segment extends up to the Clark Special Economic Zone in Pampanga.

Laxa said the 400 families that have yet to be resettled in Bulacan have opted to take the agency's "balik probinsya" (return to the province) assistance worth P14,000 each.

"We have substantially cleared the areas and are focusing now on post-relocation assistance like livelihood," he said.

The state-owned North Luzon Railways Corp., he said, has no reason to defer the start of the project given to the contractor, the China National Machinery and Equipment Corp.

Laxa said the NHA is expected to begin in January the relocation of 19,500 families in Pampanga.

Continuing protest

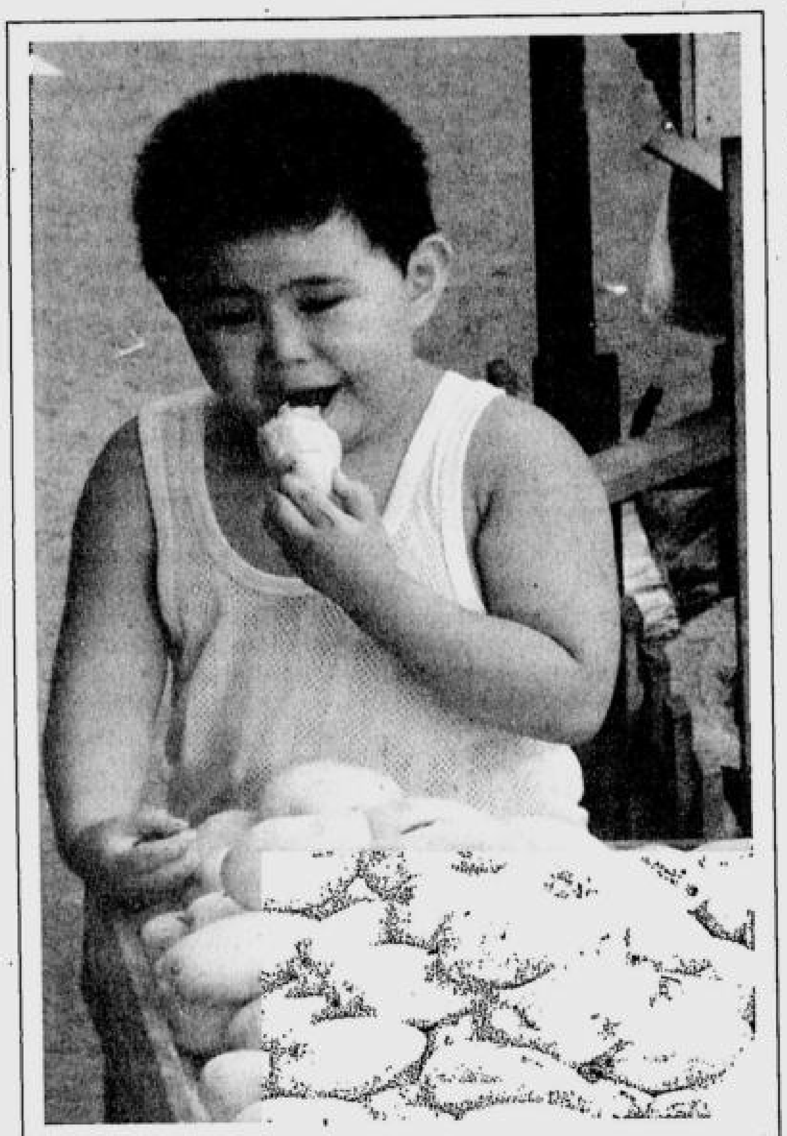
But while the relocation in Bulacan beat the target set by De Castro, who is also chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, urban poor groups continue to protest.

Residents have devoted the first week of December to rallies to stop the demolition of houses and to demand affordable housing terms from the government.

Jess del Prado, of the Bulacan Urban Poor Federation said the HUDCC, NHA, PNRC and the local governments-led local inter-agency councils managed to relocate the Bulacan families by "deception, intimidation and force."

"We were promised 14 [sets of] assistance, most of which did not come. Their aim was just to remove us out of the tracks, never solving our long problem of having no lands for our homes," Del Prado said.

"You're told that you can't do anything because the NorthRail is a government project, or you're going to lose your chance to get a house," said resident Corazon Ortega. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*



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Peace zone in Sagada holds after 17 years

By Desiree Caluza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—SINCE ITS DECLARATION as a peace zone in the Cordillera 17 years ago, the tourist resort town of Sagada in Mt. Province has been peaceful.

Thomas Killip, presidential assistant for Cordillera affairs and former Sagada mayor, said Sagada became a venue in 1994 for negotiations for the release of seven policemen who were taken prisoners by the communist New People's Army.

The town also witnessed their release, he said.

During a peace dialogue at the University of the Philippines Baguio, Killip said even while there was no conflict between the military and the NPA when the peace zone was established in 1988, the peace mechanism still covers other social conflicts in nearby or even more distant communities whenever they seek their services and assistance.

He said the Sagada peace zone also became a venue of the latest preliminary peace consultations between representatives of warring villages of Bugnay town in Kalinga and Betwagan tribe of Sadanga town in Mt. Province for the restoration of their peace pact, which, for the last two years, resulted in the death of 12 people.

Peace needed

The peace zone was initiated by Sagada community members in 1988 when armed conflicts between government soldiers and communist rebels escalated.

Fear gripped the community because the residents could no longer work in their farms, said Killip.

"It was one of the most complicated problems that the community ever encountered. Unlike in the past when the community could easily determine who were outsiders and who were hostile to the community, the armed protagonists in this war were people from the Cordillera, members of the same ethnic backgrounds, and worse, could be relatives," he said.

He said our culture would strongly abhor a situation where relatives or residents of the same town would kill each other in their own place.

"For the community, this was another type of war situation never before experienced and with no easy solution in sight. What then was the mechanism appropriate for the situation?" he asked.

He said the community members decided to form a body, representing various sectors, to push for agenda for peace. The other functions of the body would be to hold dialogues with the military and the NPA to articulate and advance the community's interest.

Talks

The town was used for peace negotiations not only for the ongoing hostilities between the military and NPA but also for the other types of conflicts such as tribal wars or inter-community conflicts.

Killip said indigenous culture and practices must be respected at all times.

"To the community, it was better to do something than to sit and watch their children being killed left and right. To the community, it was far better to come up with a mechanism for self-preservation so that few people would become victims of a shooting war," he said.

However, he said many community members were aware that the purpose of the community mechanism for peace and survival was to stop the war because it was a national phenomenon which needs a "national solution of sorts."

"While many were also aware that it may not be a perfect mechanism, many saw that it is still an important instrument for the protection and safety of people especially civilians," he said.

When peace groups and movements learned about the community's initiative, they offered their services by facilitating dialogues with military officials and the government's peace commission, he said.

These groups popularized the term "peace zone" in reference to Sagada's peace initiatives.

At first, when the concept of peace zone was proposed to both conflicting parties, there were reservations, suspicion and outright rejection.

For the military, the concept is the handiwork of local officials sympathetic to the NPA while the NPA thought that it was a part of a low-intensity-conflict strategy of the Armed Forces by using the civilian community in the fight against the NPA, said Killip.

Trading post for farmers sought

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—The province's vegetable farmers are asking the Department of Agriculture to help institutionalize a marketing scheme that will enable them to directly sell their produce to Metro Manila's public markets.

The scheme will call for the establishment of more stalls and spaces in selected public markets in Metro Manila where farmers themselves can guarantee a steady supply of highland vegetables, officials of the Benguet Federation of Farmers Inc. (BFFI) said.

"Giving farmers direct access to the markets will level the playing field with middlemen or traders who, until now, continue to dominate vegetable trading by dictating prices on a day to day basis," said Loreto Buyaan, BFFI public relations officer.

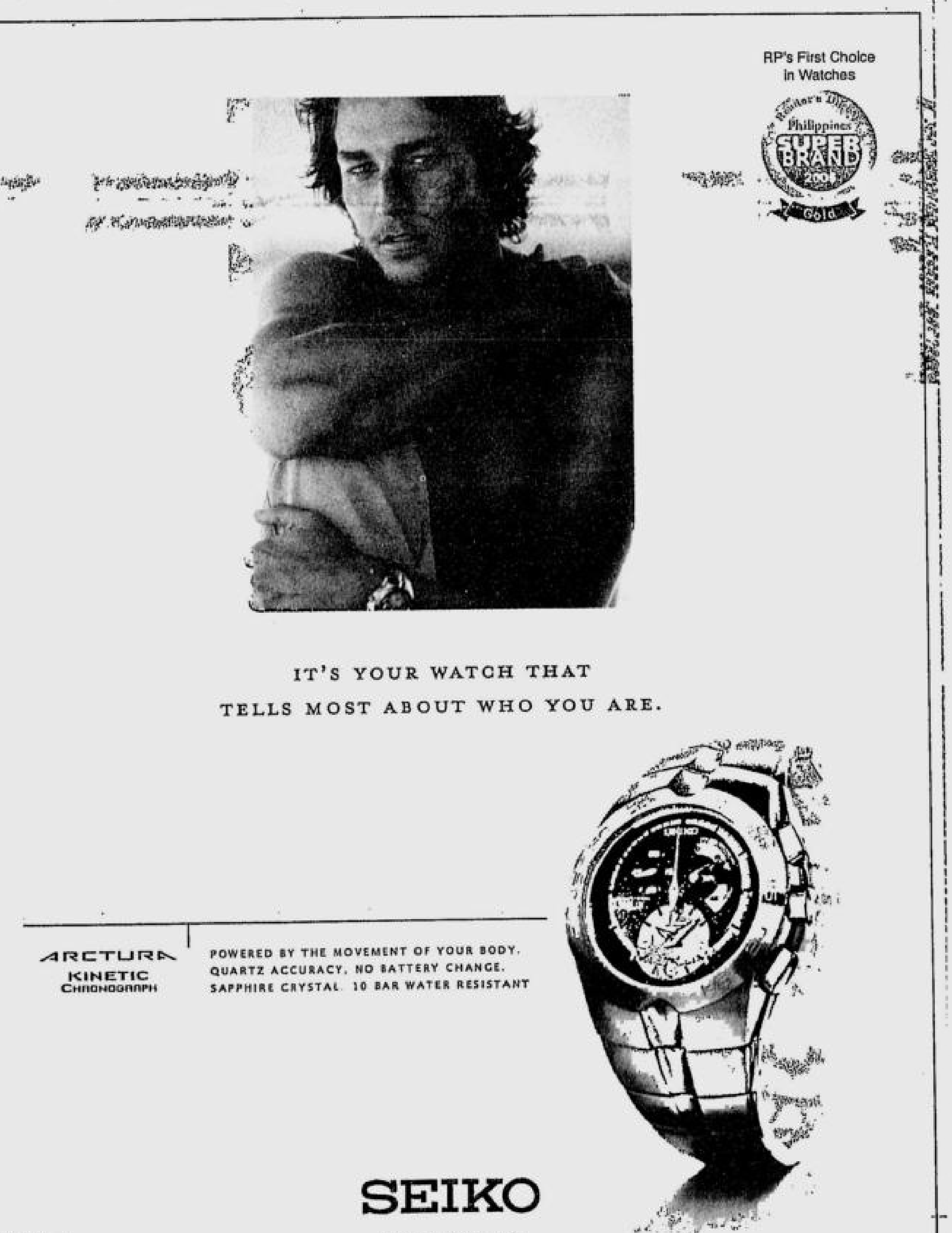
Farmers have bewailed the fact that until today, middlemen still control the pricing and volume flow of vegetables traded at the vegetable trading post here, Buyaan said.

The province supplies more than 80 percent of the country's demand for semi-temperate crops such as cabbages, potatoes, carrots, pechay, celery and lettuce.

Buyaan said the DA had tested direct access markets for farmers in Parañaque and Divisoria and the results had been very encouraging.

"We sold the vegetables at the right prices. The more markets, the better," he said.

He said, however, some customers still preferred to buy vegetables dealt by middlemen. *Delmar Cariño, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*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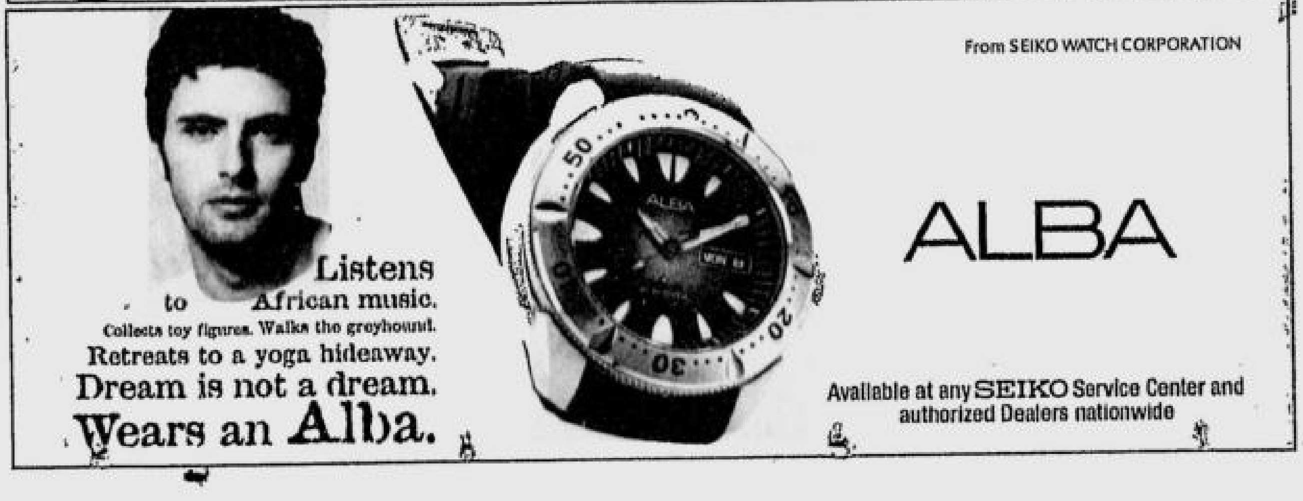
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2 slain journalists buried

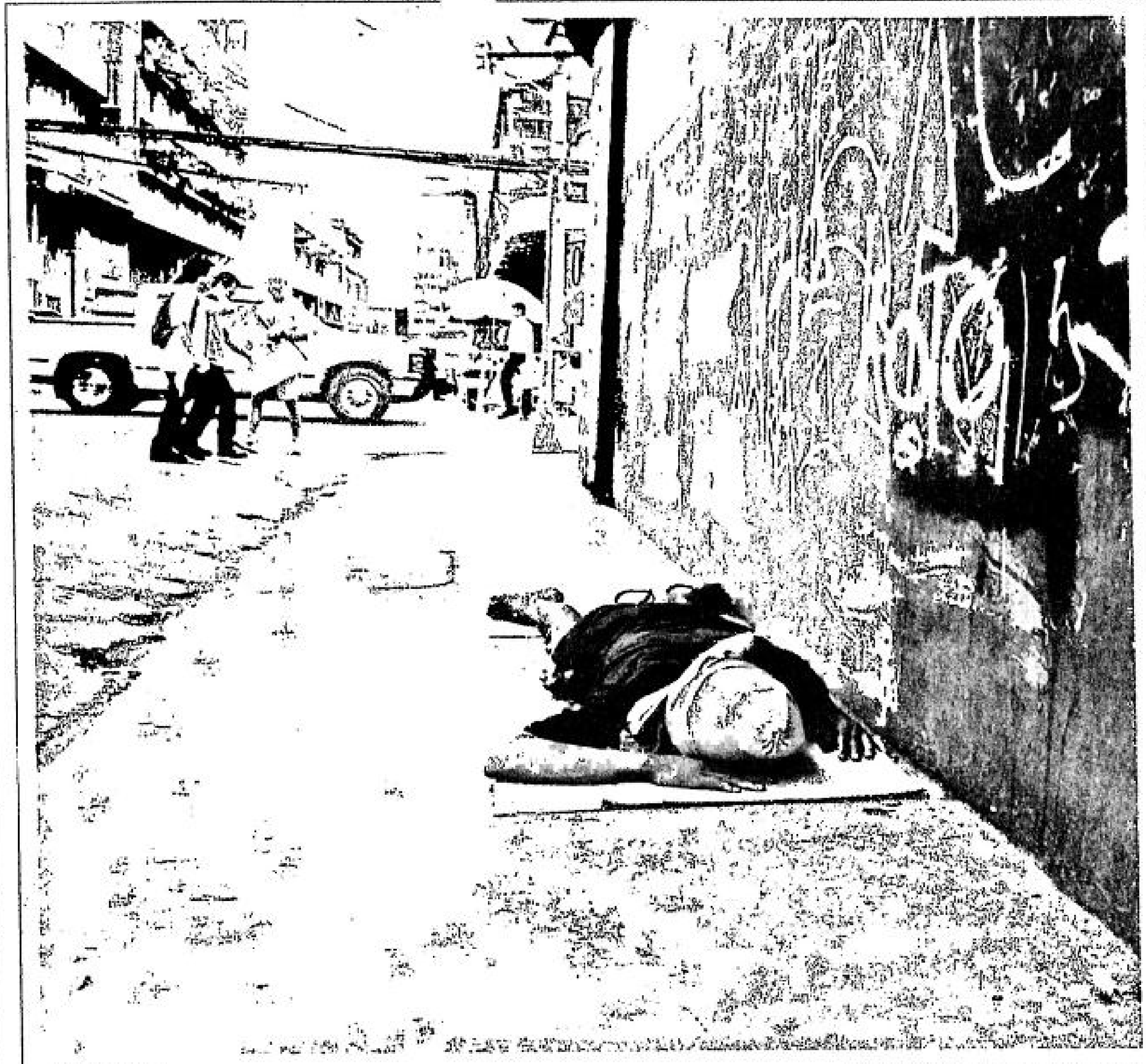
SANS MEDIA FANFARE, THE REMAINS OF murdered Laguna journalist Robert "Robby" Ramos was cremated at a crematorium in Biñan, Laguna while slain broadcaster and Bayan Muna leader Ricardo Ding Uy was laid to rest at the Sorsogon public cemetery on Saturday amid calls for justice for the death of the two.

Ramos' friends and loved ones brought his body to the Eternal Gardens in Barangay San Antonio, carrying a lone streamer bearing their call for justice.

Rain failed to stop mourners from holding a caravan that started around noon from the Uy residence at Barangay Basud to the Sts. Peter and Paul Cathedral, a distance of about 9 kilometers.

Hundreds of friends, relatives and supporters, mostly in black shirts, filled the cathedral while members of various progressive groups carrying placards and banners braved the rain outside as the requiem Mass was celebrated.

Marlon Ramos and Bobby Labalan, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau



DENIZEN

DENNIS JAY SANTOS/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

An unidentified man turns a sidewalk in a street in Cagayan de Oro City into a hom , keeping only a pair of slippers and a recycled carton as his worldly possessions.

Hope raised for coastal areas to breathe again

SAN FERNANDO CITY—THERE'S HOPE, AFter all, for the coastal areas of the country to recuperate from ecological problems that have rendered the bodies of water almost unable to regenerate their marine resources.

While the bays are in a vulnerable state, "there are bright prospects," said Porfirio Alinio of the University of the Philippines-Marine Environment Resource Foundation Inc. (UP-MERF) that conducted the studies on the coastal waters for the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources-fishery resource management project.

Current conditions and the resource management initiatives in three coastal areas in Luzon—the Lingayen Gulf in Pangasinan, Puerto Princesa and Honda bays in Palawan and San Miguel Bay in Camarines Sur—were presented during the Luzon cluster workshop on Nov. 23-25 here.

BFAR Regional Director Nestor Domenden said the workshop seeks to consolidate information and experiences in the bays as vital inputs in the formulation of the Sustainable Philippine Fisheries Agenda.

Time is ticking for the bodies of water where human activities, like overfishing and illegal fishing are the orders of the day, and interventions like sanctuaries or marine protected areas and strict law enforcement and legislation are being implemented.

The studies showed the Lingayen Gulf is in worst ecological situation with the fishermen's average daily catch pegged at only 2.7 kilos a day.

Without any intervention such as fish sanctuaries, the gulf can only support 8,000 of 16,000 fishers dependent on the gulf.

Most overfished

"It's the most overfished (body of water). Fortunately, the people have taken steps (to revive it)," Alinio told reporters.

More than a dozen fish sanctuaries have been established by people's organizations and local governments in the Lingayen Gulf. About 200 hectares were also reforested with mangroves.

Lingayen Gulf benefits from cooperation among local officials of the towns facing it. "The gulf is rising up and many good practices are emerging (among the stakeholders)," Alinio said.

Wilfredo Campos of the UP-MERF reported that, to support the 16,000 fishers, at least 46 percent of the Lingayen Gulf must be dedicated to sanctuaries (areas closed to fishing) to enable the gulf to regenerate its dwindling fishery stocks.

The San Miguel Bay, which is only three-fourths the size of the Lingayen Gulf, is in a better situation as the average daily catch is 8.2 kilograms a day, the highest yield among the bays studied.

The bay can support all of its 6,000 fishers without any intervention such as sanctuaries but if 40 percent of the bay is converted into sanctuary, it can support up to 11,000 fishers.

Problems

But like Lingayen Gulf, San Miguel Bay still has to contend with illegal fishers who use *buli-buli* (trawls) to catch fish. These trawls destroy coral reefs.

Puerto Princesa and Honda bays can sustainably support a maximum of about 1,500 fishers or 50 percent of the current fishers, without sanctuaries.

To support almost 3,000 fishers in these bays, at least 50 percent of the areas should be converted into sanctuaries, according to the studies presented.

Overfishing in Puerto Princesa Bay is more severe as compared to Honda Bay and deployment of sanctuaries alone is not sufficient to prevent collapse of fisheries in Puerto Princesa over the long term.

Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI N. Luzon Bureau

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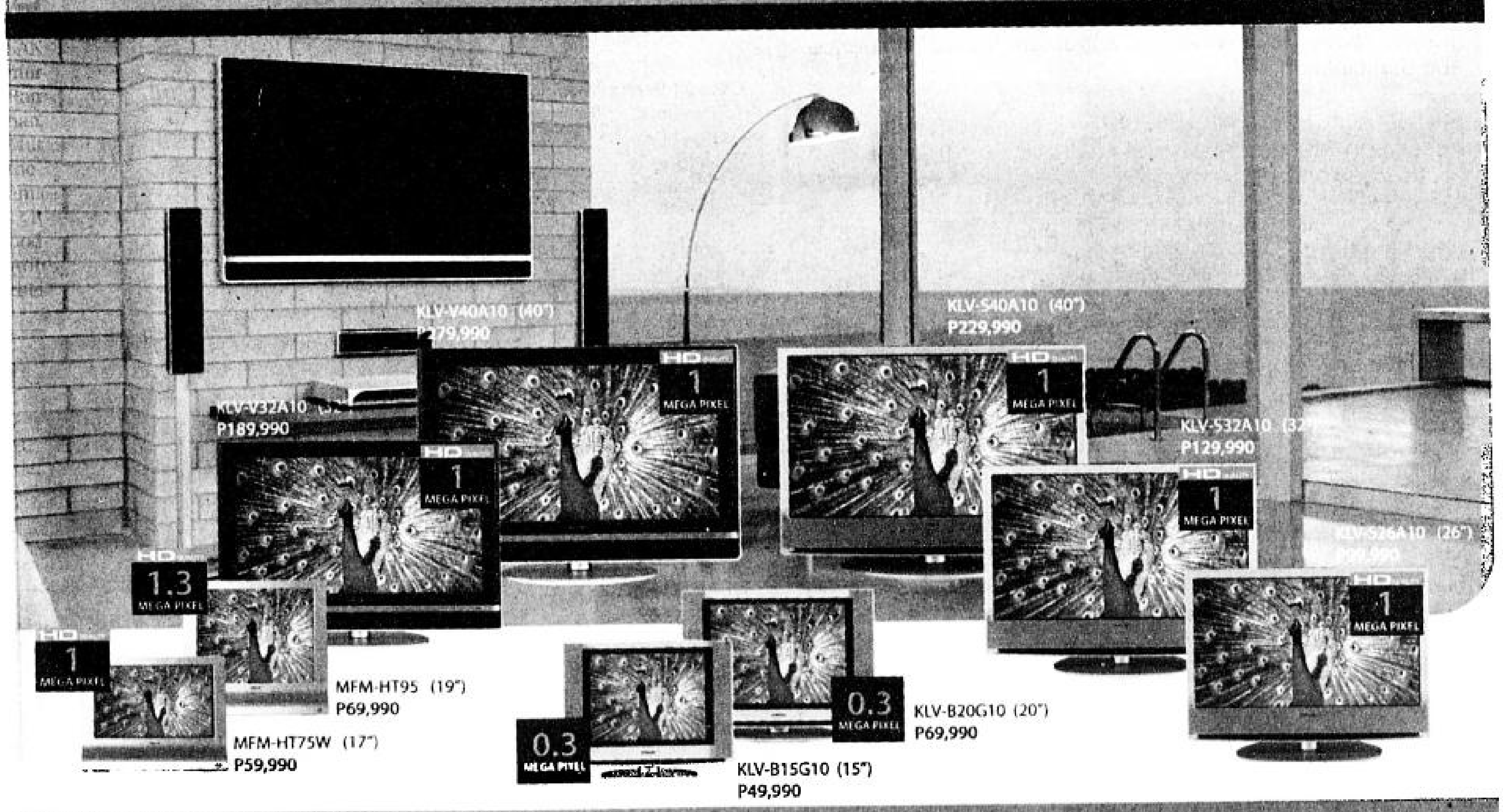

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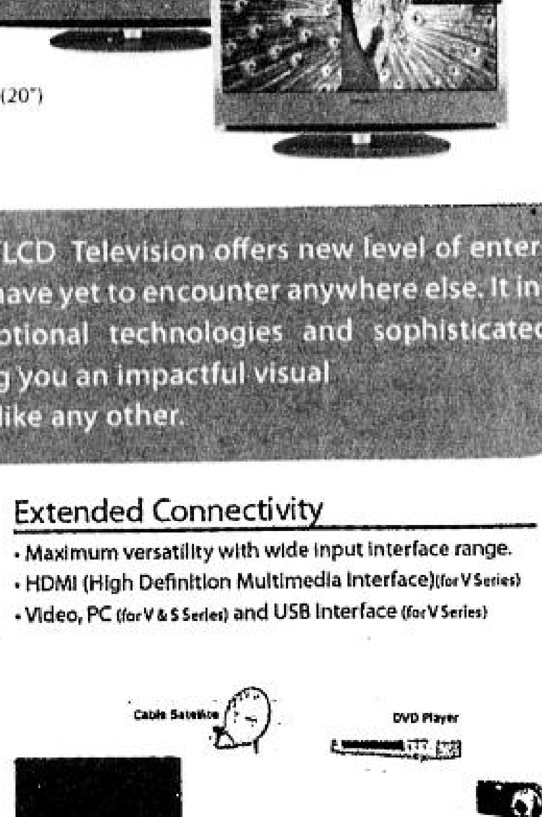

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No stoppage of power supply in Cebu, says gov

By Jolene R. Bulambot
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—THE POWER CRISIS IN CEBU has been averted after Cebu Private Power Corp. (CPPC) agreed not to suspend the operation of its power generation in Barangay Ermita here and continue its negotiations with power distributor Visayan Electric Co. (Veco).

Cebu Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia on Friday said the CPPC and Veco reached a compromise agreement during a closed-door meeting she initiated on Thursday afternoon.

She, however, declined to say what transpired during the meeting except to say that CPPC would continue supplying power to Veco despite the expiration of their interim agreement on Friday.

Among those who attended the meeting were Roger Lim, CPPC general manager; Al Aboitiz, Veco vice president; and Energy Regulatory Commission officials.

"They agreed between themselves that there would be no stoppage of power supply once the interim agreement expires (Friday). Both have agreed in upholding public interest," said Garcia.

"Hopefully, other issues surrounding the entire situation will start to unravel so that they may have more harmonious relationship. They're trying hard to hammer out a workable solution," she added.

Garcia said she would call another meeting with officials of the National Power Corp. and the National Transmission Co. on Nov. 30 to get the over-all power supply in the province.

Garcia called for a meeting with Veco and CPPC officials on Thursday after the CPPC announced it decided to suspend operations of its power generation plant in Ermita here on Saturday due to a dispute with Veco over the renegotiation of the interim supply contract with the power distribution firm.

The agreement, which expired on Friday, allowed a pricing mechanism to determine the rates charged by CPPC for power supplied to Veco.

Veco said in a statement that it "never shut its doors to negotiation" although it found CPPC's proposal unacceptable because the "prices were high and "grossly disadvantageous to its customers."

It pointed out that the original terms of the Power Supply Agreement signed in 1997 set CPPC's price at 2 percent less of Napocor's selling price.

The CPPC supplies 23 percent of the requirements of Veco, equivalent to 62 megawatts. Veco is serving more than 220,000 households and 22,000 businesses in the cities of Cebu, Mandaue and Talisay and the towns of Minglanilla, Naga, San Fernando, Consolacion and Liloan.

ROUNDUP

Payroll money stolen

DAVAO CITY—Two bonnet-wearing armed men on Wednesday stole the payroll money of the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office (PSWDO) in Lanao del Sur amounting to P1 million, police authorities said. The money was stolen as PSWDO staff member, Sarife Arumpac, who withdrew it from the Landbank branch in downtown Marawi City, was about to enter the office, which is just across the bank, police said. One of the suspects reportedly pointed a handgun at Arumpac while the other one grabbed the money bag before fleeing. Apart from salaries, the stolen money also included funds for Christmas bonuses and cash gifts for the employees.

Ryan D. Rosauro, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Taiwanese held in Cebu

CEBU CITY—Police at the Mactan Cebu International Airport arrested a Taiwanese on Thursday while he was about to board a plane bound for Taipei for allegedly possessing illegal drugs. Chunhsiung Peng, 23, was detained at the Lapulapu city jail after he was charged with possession of illegal drugs in violation of the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act before the regional trial court. The suspect, along with two other young Taiwanese, was supposed to board the Mandarin Airline flight AE 824 for Taipei at about 7:30 p.m. when aviation security policemen accosted him at the international departure area. Sixteen rolls of dried marijuana leaves were found inside his cigarette case when frisked by the police, said PO1 Christian Torres of the Lapulapu City police station.

Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau

River dredging OKd

LEGAZPI CITY—Albay Gov. Fernando Gonzalez has approved the clearing of the silted Maninila river channel along the slopes of Mayon Volcano, said Cedric Daep, head of the Albay Public Safety and Emergency Management Office of the provincial disaster coordinating council. "Dredging of Purok 3 in Barangay Maninila, Guinobatan is needed to protect the area from threats of volcanic mudflow," Daep said. He said the dredging was recommended after an inspection of the silted channel on Nov. 11. Barangay Maninila passed a resolution on Oct. 9 seeking dredging support after typhoon "Labuyo" that hit the province on Sept. 15 caused mud to flow through a different course.

Gina Rodriguez, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Wreck protection sought

BAGO PA MAN MA "CHOP-CHOP" ANG WRECKAGE !

DONSOL, Sorsogon—Local officials of this whaleshark capital of the world is frantically seeking help from various government agencies to protect the wreckage of an 18th-century galleon. Mayor Salve Ocaya said the wreckage was discovered by fishermen off the coast of Barangay Gimagaan and might be looted if not secured immediately. A cannon, she said, had been salvaged from the ship and could no longer be found. Reports said the cannon was taken by unidentified armed men from fishermen who found it. She said they have sought the help of the Navy, which have sent scuba divers but they also left after diving, leaving the wreck unsecured.

Bobby Q. Labalan, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Church theft appeal

TUGUEGARAO CITY—Local officials urged residents to help them identify the people or groups involved in the theft of church artifacts in Cagayan. They said the bricks of the 219-year-old Church of Tocolana in Lallo town were stolen. Residents lamented the disappearance of the 279-year-old bell of the Church of Nassiping in Gattaran town. They also assailed the diggings in the famed Callao Caves.

Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

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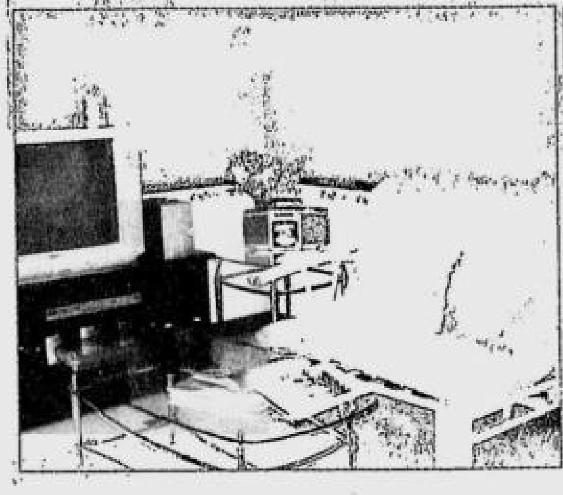

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  - 8. William Sanchez, [illegible] Antipolo City
  - 9. Imelda Carlos, [illegible] Quezon City
  - 10. Ma. Jimnily Herdero, [illegible] Antipolo City
- Five (5) winners of Sharp Television 20VL70M 51cm (20")
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  - 4. Emily Brazonan, [illegible] Mandaluyong City
  - 5. Derick A. Dievno, [illegible] Tanay, Rizal
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  - 1. Ma. Eloisa Argara, [illegible] Taguig City
  - 2. Augusto S. Cruz, [illegible] San Juan, Metro Manila

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CATEGORIES (Equity Issues to be Addressed):
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Development with Equity

CONCEPT PAPER FORMAT

Page 1:

ENTRY FOR: (pls. check one)
☐ Indicate the specific category: ____________
☐ Advocacy or Policy/Action Research on Population and Development
☐ Basic Infrastructure and Equipment for Education or Health
☐ Biodiversity Conservation, Climate Change and International Waters

PROPONENT DETAILS

Name of Proponent Organization/Institution/LGU:
Contact Person/ Position:
Affiliation(s) with any coalition or network (if any):
Contact Details
Address:
Phone/Fax No.:
E-mail:

Name(s) of Partner Organization(s)/Institution(s) (if any):
Contact Person(s):
Contact Details:
Address:
Phone/Fax No.
E-mail:

Title of the Project:

Target Marginalized Group(s)
(Please specify type and number of beneficiaries/participants):

Equity Issue(s) to be Addressed:

Project Implementation Site(s) (Please specify province and municipality):

Project Duration:

Breakdown of Indicative Budget by Major Expense Category:

	Total Project Cost	Funding Request	Funding Counterpart
Client Cost (Expenses that are directed towards the clients, partners, beneficiaries)			
Project Management Cost			
Capital Outlay (Infrastructure, equipment)			
Others			
TOTAL			

Pages 2 to 4:

PROJECT QUESTIONS:

1. What is the problem/issue on inequity/exclusion that the project will address? What are the causes/roots of this problem or issue?
2. What are the objectives of the project?
3. Who is/are your target group(s) and how will they benefit from this project? How will this project address inequities, or increase/improve opportunities for the target group(s) to contribute to and share in development?
   For action research projects: How will the research eventually benefit the target group(s)?
4. How did the target group(s) participate in the conceptualization of this project?
5. Will the project contribute to addressing the deeper causes/roots of the problem / issue you have described above? How?
6. Where are the innovations in the proposed project? How is your idea different from existing approaches that are addressing the problem(s)/issue(s)?
7. What are the key outputs expected after six months and after one year? What are the major activities that will be undertaken? Please describe the target group's participation for each major activity.
8. How will this project contribute towards building or strengthening partnerships, particularly those between the target group and other parties?
9. How will your project be sustained even after the grant funding? Will the project/ some project components be taken over by the target group after the one-year project duration? What are these and how will the target group be prepared for taking over?
10. How can the project be scaled up after the project period, and/or replicated in areas with similar conditions?

RP opens quest for SEAG crown with 5 golds

From page A1

record held by Indon Ni Putu Desy Margawaty.

Indonesia snatched two golds, one bronze and one silver, towing Vietnam with a 1-4-3 tally.

Torres saved her best jump of 6.47m for last to snare the women's long jump gold, the country's first, at the expense of compatriot Lerma Bulauitan-Gabito at the Rizal Track Stadium.

Though way ahead in the women's 3-meter springboard synchronized event, Perez and Domenios still felt the need to do a difficult backward 2 1/2 somersault tuck position that earned the judges' nod for the Philippines' second gold at the Trace Aquatics Center in Los Baños, Laguna.

Mendoza and Adora of Cebu followed suit by topping the Latin American category of dancesports at the expense of compatriots John Errolle Melencio and Dearlie Gerodias at the Waterfront Hotel in Lahug.

Not to be outdone, Rosima and Salvador also ruled the Standard event, edging out Emmanuel Reyes and Maira Rosete as the Filipinos lived up to their tag as the favorites in the event calendared in the SEAG for the first time.

Alcano, a former AZ Billiard Rookie of the Year, bested Cebu pride Antonio Gabica, 5-3, in the finals.

Four fouls

Disheartened after fouling four of her first five tries, Torres was already sobbing in the athletes' tent at the center of the field when the crowd prodded her to go on.

Wiping her tears, the five-foot Torres responded with the golden leap that enabled the Philippines to keep its supremacy in the event. Elma Muros-Posadas was SEAG long jump queen for a record eight times while fellow track legend Lydia de Vega-Mercado held the throne in the 1983 edition.

Gabito, the 2003 Vietnam SEAG titlist, cleared 6.45m to handily beat Malaysia's Ngew Sin Nei (6.27m) for the silver.

Action in athletics heats up with 13 titles to be disputed today, including the Games' fastest man and woman in the 100-meter dash.

Favorite

Eduardo "Vertek" Buenavista, the five-foot wonder of Philippine running, is favored to repeat in the 10,000m run, like Danilo Fresnido in the javelin throw.

The 19-year-old Perez, a two-time SEAG silver medalist, and the 16-year Domenios garnered 260 points, brushing aside the challenge of Thais Sukrutai Tommaoros and Supapan Prasertkwan (239.40 points) and Malaysians Leong Mun Yee and Cheong Jun Hoong (238.11).

Perez and Domenios, who copped the silver in the recent Asian Diving Cup in Hunan, China, will part ways today when they compete in the women's 3-meter individual springboard.

Zardo Domenios, Ceseil's older brother, settled for the bronze medal in the 3-meter springboard individual after miscalculating his fourth dive and hitting the water open. He wound up with 340.17 points, way off Malaysia's Yeoh Ken Nee (387.99) and Thailand's Suchart Pichi (362.25).

Action today

Action in taekwondo, wushu and fencing begins today with a total of 49 gold medals at stake.

Athens Olympians Mary Antoinette Rivero, Donal David Geisler and Tshomlee Go lead the Filipino jins' bid in taekwondo, which dangles 16 golds at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Geisler and Rivero will see action in the lightweight matches at 7 p.m., while Jeffrey Figuerroa and Loraine Lorelie Catalan compete in the flyweight division.

Go will have his turn tomorrow in the bantamweight class, same with Esther Marie Singson in the women's division, Manuel Rivero and Kristie Elaine Alora in the featherweight class, and Alexander Briones and Maria Creselda Roxas in welterweight.

The other members of the RP taekwondo team are John Paul Lizardo and Kathleen Eunice Alora (finweight), Dax Alberto Morfe and Veronica Domingo (middleweight) and Michael Alejandrino and Sally Solis (heavyweight).

ATI-ATIHAN dancers, their bodies painted gold, perform tribal rituals at the opening ceremony of the 23rd SEA Games. LYN RILLON

Fencing events

Over at the San Juan Elementary School gymnasium in San Juan, Metro Manila, actor-sportsman Richard Gomez will banner the RP fencing team gunning for three of the 12 gold medals to be disputed today in the women's individual sabre and men and women's individual epee.

With Gomez in the epee team are Wilfredo Vizcayno, Avelino Victorino and Armando Vernal in the men's side. Harlene Orendain, Michelle Mancenido, Melly Joyce Angeles and Mary Catherine Kong make up the women's side.

The sabre team is composed of Jocelyn Naval, Joanna Franquely, Mar Wendylene Mendoza and Lenita Reyes in women's and Edward Daliva, Edmond Reyes, Gian Carlo Nocom and Walbert Mendoza in men's.

Wendelyn Mendoza, Reyes, Mancenido, Emerson Segui, Rolando Canlas Jr., Ramil Endriano and Mark Denver Atienza form the foil squad.

Wushu, the sport which the Filipinos hope to dominate, will have five of the 22 golds up for grabs at the Emilio Aguinaldo College in Manila today.

Vietnam SEAG double gold medalists Willy Wang and Arvin Ting spearhead the wushu bets' bids in the jianshu and daoshu events.

Other wushu events to be played are the nanquan and gunshu (both men and women's).

The Philippines hopes to surpass the six gold medals it won in the 2003 Vietnam SEAG.

Pedro Quina, Kenneth Lim, Ronel Andaliza, Andy Liu, Lester Pimentel, Richard Ng, Rene Catalan, Rexel Nganhayna, Mark Eddiva, Eduard Folayang, Janice Hung, Vicky Ting, Aida Yang, Jennifer Lagilag and Rhea May Rifani are the other team members.

The mountainbike competition rolls off today in Danao City in Cebu. Two gold medals are at stake in the men's and women's downhill events.

Sepak takraw eliminations for hoops events will be held at the University of San Carlos gym in Cebu City.

Economy absorbing shocks of turmoil . . .

From page A1

assured of completing her term till 2010. Far from it. She is not out of the danger zone.

The rebound merely tells us that the economy has been resilient and has absorbed the shocks of political turmoil, and should underline the message that if we had not abused the economy, with the unceasing onslaught of the seemingly implacable political impasse, the economy has a reserve of shock absorption capacity to drive an improved economic performance.

Since the days of coups during the Aquino presidency, the economy has proved its resilience despite the fact that each of the six or so coup attempts kicked the economy to its knees, especially the 1989 putsch which knocked back the economy to zero growth after climbing beyond 7 percent.

However, there's a limit to how much punishment the economy can take without breaking down in total collapse.

No sign pressure is easing

Although the pressure from the streets has diminished, the stalemate overhangs the horizon as the country enters the Christmas holidays. It does not show any sign of being broken in the new year, as Ms Arroyo continues to stonewall and her enemies continue to deny her any quarter in their campaign.

This stalemate will remain unbroken until one side cedes ground. Question is, which side will yield? Who will make the "supreme sacrifice?" Is there room for a compromise? What is the formula?

If politics is the art of the possible, compromise is impossible unless contending sides abandon the notion that, in the current crisis, the impasse can only be broken if one side achieves a total political victory and imposes the terms of unconditional surrender to the vanquished. Both the administration and its opponents are locked into this notion, and are unyielding.

The combatants have yet to fight the decisive battle of this crisis, although regime enemies had thought the administration was on the verge of collapse on July 8, and their defections would deliver the death blow.

Their calculations were proven wrong when two totally unexpected interventions saved the government from collapse—that of former President Fidel V. Ramos and the Catholic hierarchy. The interventions halted the momentum of the resignation call.

In no mood to quit

These led to the prolongation of the stalemate that, until today, seeks a decisive engagement to decide which side will prevail.

Having demonstrated that she has withstood the siege, the President is in no mood to give in to mob pressure to quit. Nor has her enemies proved that they have the muscle to topple the government through mass action.

There is not even a faint sign that regime enemies can regain momentum and carry on with their campaign beyond staging moot courts and prayer rallies and processions, which are ill-disguised political meetings held in the protective sanctuary of churches.

Unless a decisive event intervenes to break this impasse, it is not hard to see that the prospects for the new year foreshadow further paralysis of public business and an opposition incapable of dismounting the President through either constitutional or extraconstitutional means.

This impasse has already put the country in a state of weariness that partly accounts for public apathy to calls of mass mobilization for political change. There are ample signs of widespread and genuine public clamor for leadership change, which the administration cannot and should not ignore. The nation is in an unmistakable mood for leadership renewal.

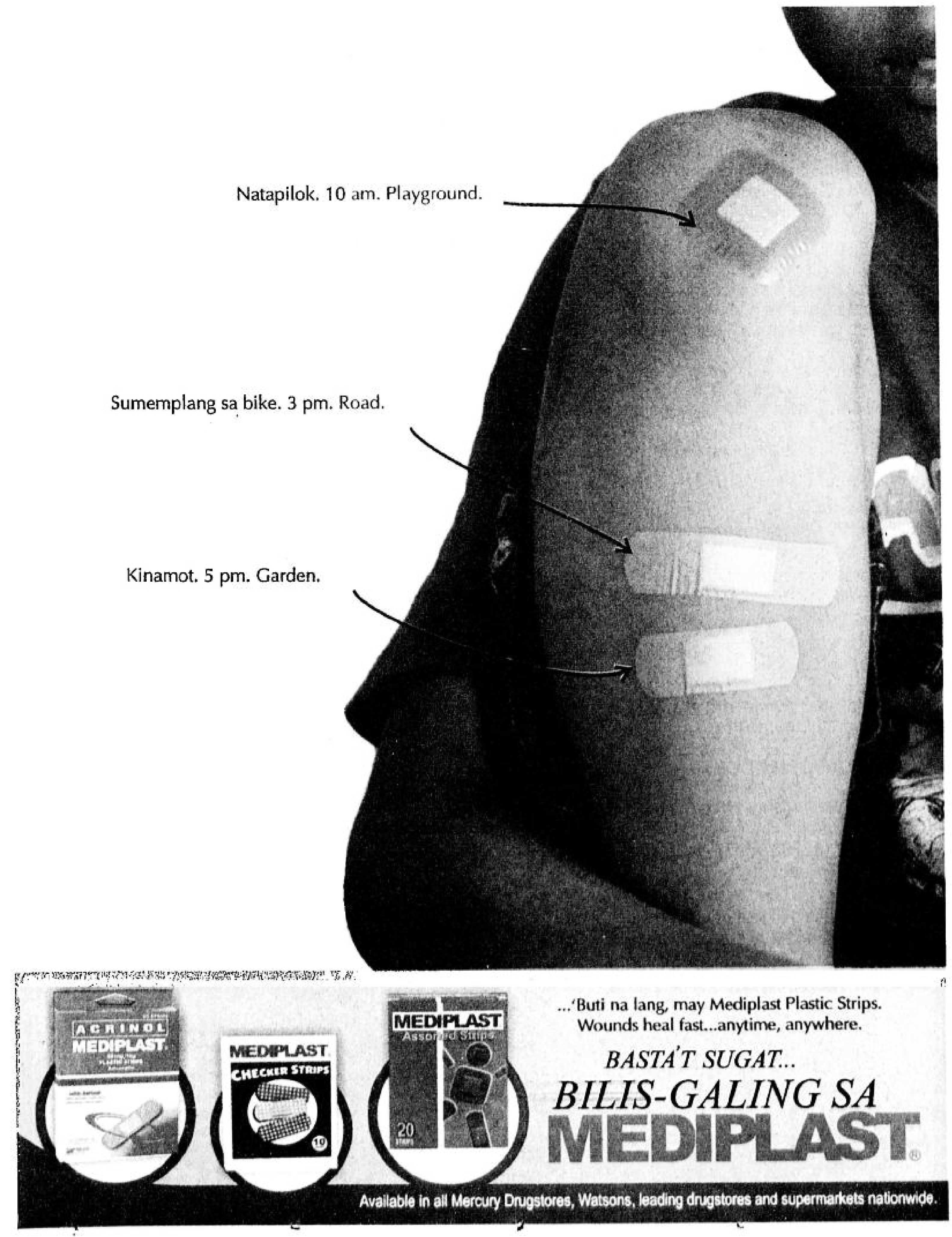
How she will go?

This takes us back to the issue I raised before the outbreak of the crisis provoked by the disclosure of the Garcillano tapes in June. The key issue is the mode of change—or how will the President go?

The modes so far proposed by regime opponents, as well as well-meaning citizens, including resignation and snap elections, have been regarded as untenable. They were thought to create more problems and divisions than they sought to solve.

The impasse invites interventions and offers temptations for power grabs from noncivil sectors of society. It underlines the importance of a compromise formula that rejects unconditional surrender of power as a prerequisite for political peace.

While the prospects of an end to political strife and paralysis in the new year are grim, we have not reached a dead end in the search of a political compromise. In the next article, I will explore such a compromise formula that will open the windows for political change and national renewal.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I never left RP, says Garcillano

From page A1

claim that he never left the country. No other sources could be reached by the Inquirer to verify what Garcillano had said, which ran counter to earlier official reports.

'In Singapore on July 14'

The Department of Foreign Affairs, which on Aug. 17 reported that Garcillano arrived in Singapore on July 14, appeared to be standing by that pronouncement.

Reached on the phone last night, DFA spokesperson Gilberto Asuque said its report on the Garcillano trip was based on information received by the Philippine Embassy in Singapore from that country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Asuque declined to comment on speculations that another person traveled to Singapore using Garcillano's identity to throw off those searching for him.

The DFA earlier said it had alerted all its more than 80 missions abroad to look for Garcillano.

Question remains

Garcillano's disappearance five months ago and the controversy the tapes provoked plunged Ms Arroyo into the gravest crisis of her troubled presidency, sparked Cabinet resignations and protests across the country, and triggered impeachment cases which her loyal supporters in the House of Representatives quickly beat down.

Ms Arroyo now appears to be weathering the crisis but the one question that has torn the country apart remains unresolved—Did she discuss tampering with the poll results with the controversial ex-poll commissioner?

Garcillano was with lawyer Tomas Garcillano Jr., his first cousin, who will serve as his counsel when he goes to Congress to face a joint inquiry into the scandal.

Several Inquirer contacts arranged the two-hour interview.

Garci's lament

Garcillano poured his heart out, lamenting that the public had been "gravely misled" by Ms Arroyo's detractors.

"I'm coming out soon," he said, but "not necessarily next week."

"It depends upon the situation because we are now trying to contest the warrant of arrest," he said, referring to the order issued by the House of Representatives after he boycotted its hearings.

"I don't know if the Supreme Court will decide on the petition that we filed. If the tribunal upholds the warrant's legality, I'm willing to face inquiry. I have nothing to hide," he stressed.

Let people judge

Although his lawyers were still planning his legal moves, Garcillano said he was leaving his fate in the hands of the "Filipino people" who should be the ones "to judge me."

Garcillano emphatically denied rigging the presidential election to favor Ms Arroyo, saying stories about the alleged conspiracy to steal the 2004 polls were peddled by opposition leaders "obsessed with their own selfish interests."

"They should not deceive the people. You tell them they should tell the people the truth because we never talked about elections anymore [during the national canvassing of votes]," Garcillano said.

He said it was impossible for him to oversee massive cheating single-handedly.

"I'll tell everything that I know—there was no indication that there was cheating but they (the opposition) just concluded that there [was] cheating without any basis at all," he said.

Garcillano sounded like he couldn't care less if he was being used to get at Ms Arroyo.

Advice to politicians

"It's OK as long as they are not going to destroy the President at all costs just because they want power. I hope you will tell them that. I hope they will not use the people as their tool to enhance their interest, selfish interest."

He hoped that the politicians would put the nation's interest above politics.

"They are holding high positions, they are big people. All the more that they should think of the welfare of those [within] their jurisdiction."

Garcillano admitted earlier to having talked to Ms Arroyo and a host of opposition leaders but these did not concern padding votes.

Nothing to hide

"In fact, I issued a statement last election that the most peaceful [balloting] experienced by this country was the last election because three days after, we were done already."

He said he had "nothing to hide," yet was treated as a "victim" in this political war.

"To be very frank with you, I'm not accepting that there were such [wiretapped] conversations between me and the President. Whose conversation was tapped allegedly? It's mine and the President's? Who is the victim in this wiretapping? It's me. Then why do they have to compel me to testify on something which does not exist?"

Where's original tape?

Garcillano said he had no qualms about going to Congress, but that before he could be asked about the specifics of the supposed taped conversations, "they have to show us that there was such an original [master] tape, if such indeed existed."

He described the tape as "spliced, tampered, edited or corrected" and "tailored to fit their sinister purpose."

"What I'm telling you now are the true happenings during the last election. There was no irregularity."

He doubted the authenticity of the audio tapes that had been aired in public.

"I can't be certain that it was my voice. There are people who can imitate someone else's voice."

Assuming that the tapes' contents were true, he pointed out there was no showing that he and Ms Arroyo had talked about rigging the elections.

GMA asking

"Assuming that we talked, remember that the controversial tape which we are now trying to contest was tapped on May 24 … And the subject of the conversation was the lowering of the advantage of the President over her opponent.

"She was asking why her lead decreased to 892,000 when two, three days before that, (her) advantage … over FPJ (Fernando Poe Jr.) was more than one million already. "

Garcillano denied ever saying, "*papataasin* (I will increase it)" or "*pipilitin ko* (I will try)," adding:

"That should be emphasized because the subject of the conversation was no longer (the 2004) election. She was only concerned [about] the reduction of her advantage over her opponent. The canvassing (in the provincial level was over). In fact, we in the Comelec knew very well that the results of the elections had already been submitted to Congress. All the certificates of canvass were already in the Senate, except those places where there were special elections (such as) Lanao."

Threats on life

But to begin with, he said, the alleged tapping of his conversations had started nine days after the elections when all the results from the provinces had already been submitted to Congress.

"These were already beyond the reach of anybody," he said.

In a written statement he gave to the Inquirer, Garcillano also denied allegations made by former Malacañang staffer Michaelangelo Zuce that he was at Ms Arroyo's La Vista residence where money was allegedly distributed to election officers.

He also denied claims that he had boasted of receiving bundles of money for his election "operations."

Garcillano said threats on his life forced him to disappear.

"That's the primary reason why I had to keep myself away from the public eye. Much as I would have liked to come out as early as about a month after this thing [began], I have the feeling that somebody might be interested in the answers that I will give. And if they don't like it, then certainly my life and that of my wife are in danger."

Although there were no "specific threats," some text messages "were intimidating and there were calls which I did not like."

Garcillano said he hadn't spoken with Arroyo since he went into hiding. "Until now, I have not spoken to her."

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3pm - 6pm | University of Canberra College – Presenter: Mr Greg Draper

Monday 28 November 2005
9am - 10.30am | Curtin International College – Presenter: Mr Barry Fleming
11am - 12.30pm | Curtin, Sarawak – Presenter: Mr Charles Tan
2.30pm - 5pm | Curtin, Perth – Presenter: Mr Walter Ong

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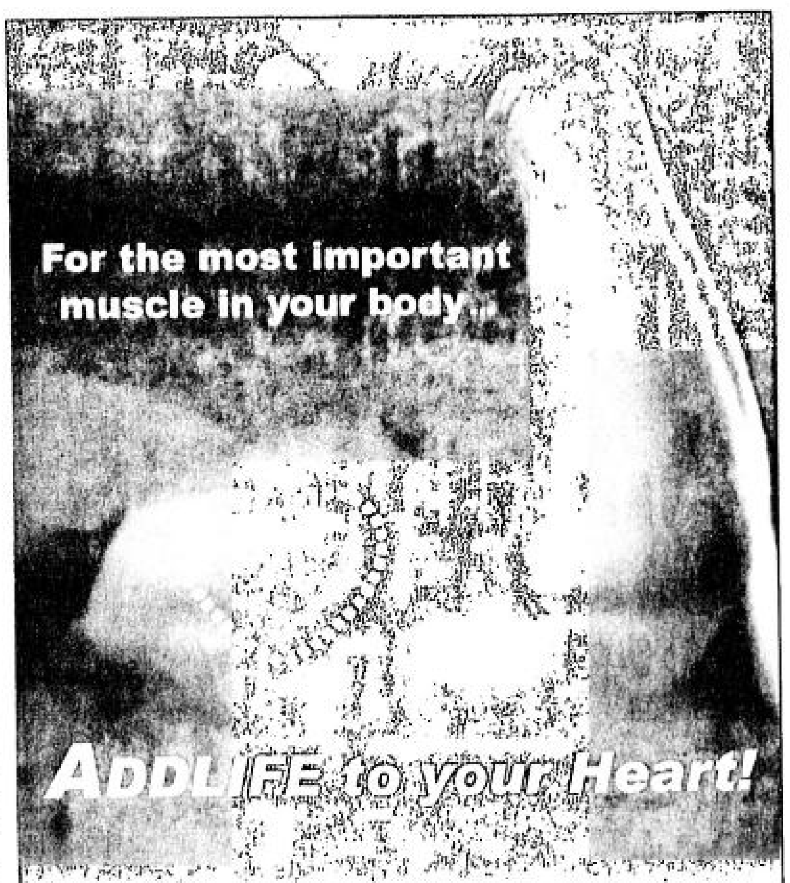

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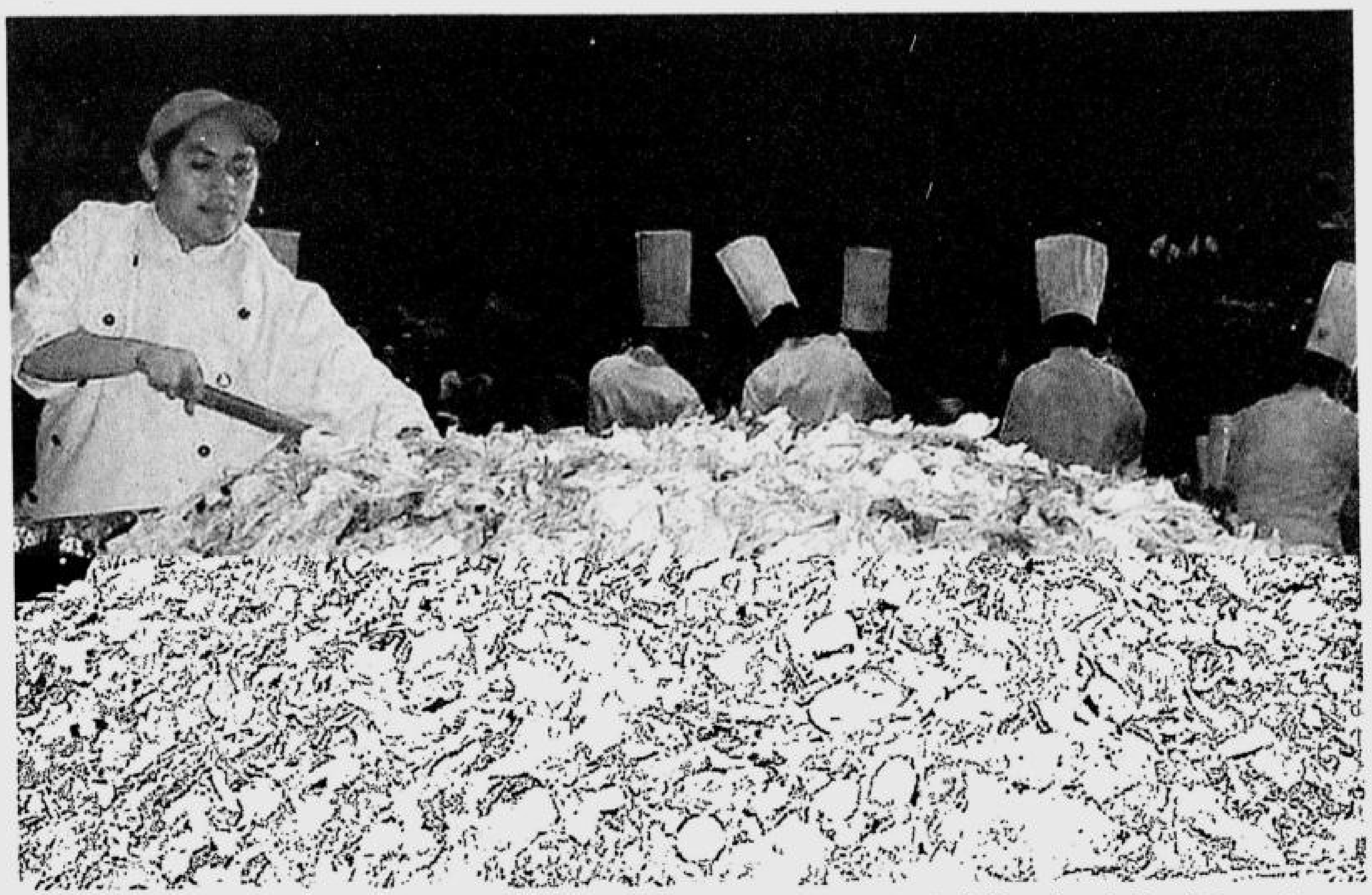
Children enjoy veggie servings from giant salad



SEA OF GREENS. A chef does his part in preparing the giant tossed salad at the fund-raising festival held yearly at the Baguio Convention Center in Baguio City.

TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

From page A1

of carrot, lettuce, cucumber, tomato and bell pepper.

A woman said her three grandchildren, aged between 8 and 10, quickly consumed two bowls each. A bowl cost P20.

Organizers earlier announced that this year's festival would try to break the record by feeding 30,000 people. But only 10,000 servings had been offered to the public as of 3 p.m.

Caesar's Salad

Bahai's first salad was a giant Caesar's Salad in 2001. It fed 5,000 people, besting the record held by a Utah community in the United States.

The second fed 12,800 people and the third 29,000, according to Bahai.

Last year, Bahai's fourth outing drew only 9,000 people because it was staged weeks after the city recorded cases of the bacterial disease meningococcemia, said Benedicto Alhambra, city tourism officer.

Alhambra said Bahai was interested in promoting nutrition through its salad festivals.

"Jeanine Chan (Bahai president) has started asking Baguio's hotel industry to start offering cheap, affordable salads in their menus to drumbeat the economic and nutritional value of vegetables that are literally available next door," Alhambra said.

La Trinidad

The vegetable-producing towns of La Trinidad and Buguias in Benguet are near Baguio. La Trinidad, a 20-minute drive from the city, serves as the region's vegetable trading post. Vegetables traded in La Trinidad are supplied to markets in Metro Manila daily.

But nutrition advocates have found that children living in or near the vegetable-producing towns do not necessarily enjoy eating vegetables.

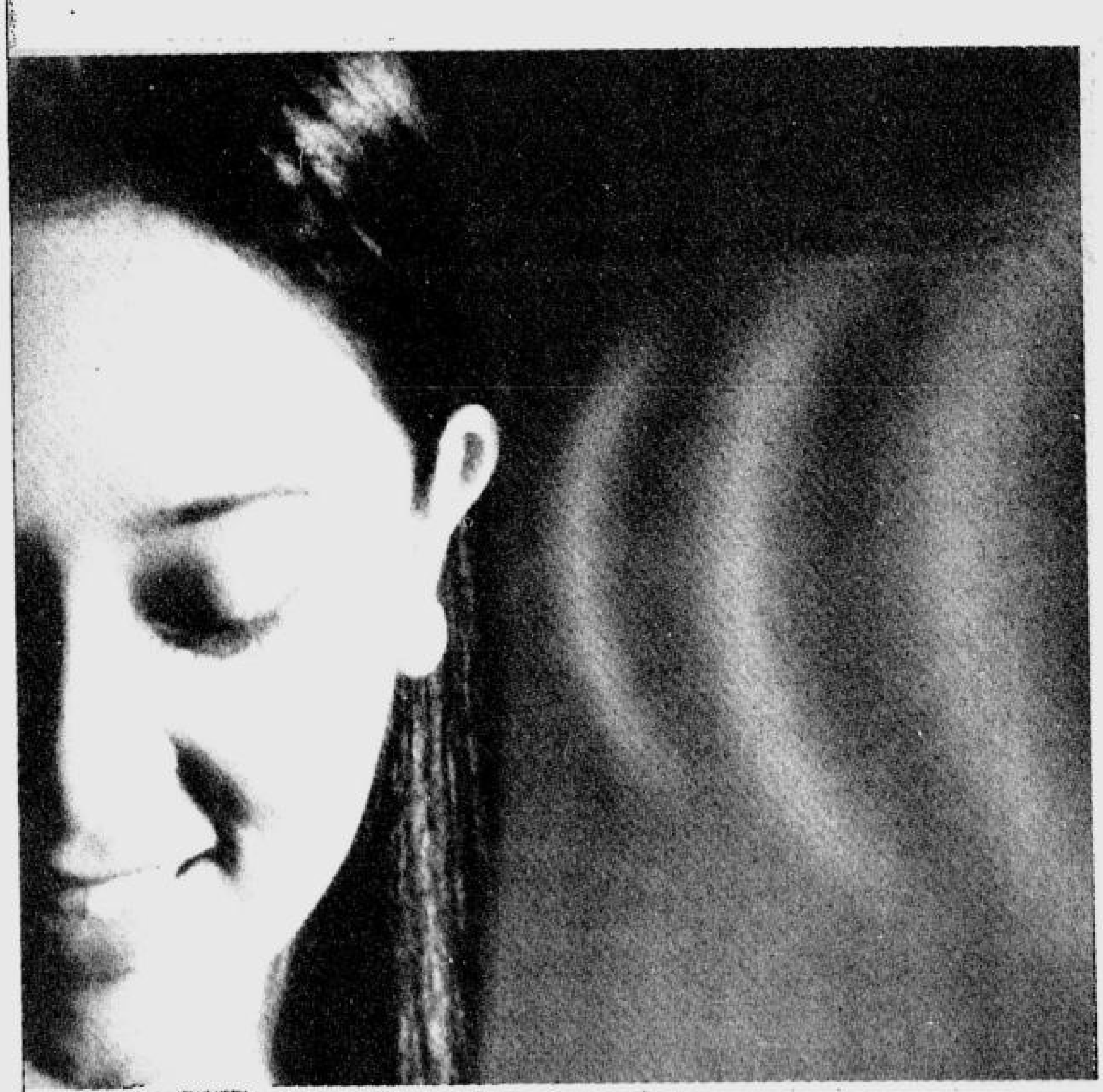
"We may have helped market the vegetables to children without knowing it," Beltran said.

He said Bahai's salad festivals were a combination of pomp and gastronomic delight.

Rock and pop concerts, celebrities and relatively cheap salad meals at the convention drew crowds from Baguio, La Union, Pangasinan and Metro Manila.

Lines for a rock-climbing facility yesterday were as long as the lines for the salad bars because each P20 ticket sold at the festival entitled the bearer to climb a small tower outside the convention hall and to rappel down.

Children were first in line.



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S'pore ...

From page A1

ago and said I don't have to hang Nguyen and that I don't have to work anymore," chief executioner Darshan Singh said on Sunday.

"I think they (the prison authorities) must be mad after seeing my pictures in the newspapers," Singh said.

Australia's Sunday Telegraph said a new executioner was expected to be flown into Singapore this week to carry out the Dec. 2 hanging of 25-year-old Nguyen Tuong Van, who was sentenced to death for carrying 400 grams of heroin while in transit at the island-nation's airport.

Singh, a 74-year-old ethnic Indian, was reported in the Australian media to have conducted more than 850 hangings in his 50-year career. The reports said Singh had wanted to retire, but the search for a replacement was unsuccessful.

Singapore's prison department could not be reached for comment.

26,000 doses

Despite repeated pleas from Australia to reconsider clemency for the former salesman, Singapore has stood firm on its decision, saying that Nguyen was caught with enough heroin "for 26,000 doses" and that the government would not allow Singapore to be used as a transit for illicit drugs.

Australian Prime Minister John Howard has warned Singapore to prepare for lingering resentment in Australia if it goes ahead with the execution of Nguyen but Howard has rejected public calls in Australia for boycotts of Singaporean companies and trade sanctions with one of its closest Asian allies.

Howard made another personal appeal to Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Malta on Saturday, Australian media reported on Sunday.

Reuters

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Editor Ester G. Dipasupil

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MMDA to implement OBR scheme even on Sundays

By Tarra V. Quismundo

BEGINNING THIS SUNDAY, THE METROpolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) would implement the Organized Bus Route (OBR) scheme seven days a week in anticipation of the holiday rush.

"We really have to control the number of buses even on Sundays, because what happens is there is still long queuing. We don't know how many buses would come out," said Angelito Vergel de Dios, MMDA Traffic Operations Center executive director.

A traffic reduction scheme, the OBR took effect on Edsa last October, placing roughly 2,600 registered buses under a controlled dispatch scheme pegged on commuter demand at a given time.

The scheme, first conceived in 2003, aimed to maximize the per trip loading capacity of buses, a feat that had proved impossible under a free-for-all dispatch.

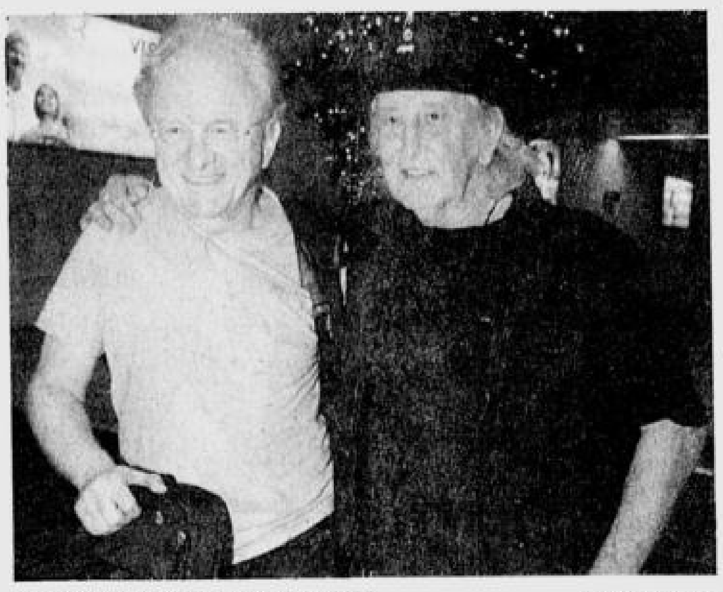
It also doubled as the agency's effort to clamp down on colorum buses that further congested Metro Manila's major road artery which had teemed with half empty buses before the OBR took flight.

The agency, however, decided to lift the OBR on Sundays as only a few buses ply Edsa on what is usually a slow commuting day.

MMDA Metropolitan Road Rules Enforcement System head Mon Santiago, who is in charge of the OBR operations, had said in a previous interview that the agency was also considering implementing the scheme seven days a week with the expected increase in passenger volume during the holiday season.

"That's also part of it because we expect that there would be more commuters on the road, and we are already seeing that increase," Vergel de Dios said.

Buses plying Edsa pass through several shopping districts and malls, including commercial centers in Ayala Center, Makati, Ortigas Center in Pasig, the Araneta Center in Cubao, southern metro's commercial areas of Alabang and Baclaran, and Caloocan's Monumento area.



POPULAR DUO IN TOWN ROGER MARGALLO
British pop stars Peter Asher and Gordon Waller, more popularly known as Peter and Gordon, arrived yesterday at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport for a concert on Dec. 1 at the Araneta Coliseum. The duo became known in the '60s for their songs "World without love" and "I go to pieces."

Tumana Bridge almost done; Feb. opening likely

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND Highways has begun the last phase of construction on the Tumana Bridge which would provide a faster, alternative route between Marikina and Quezon City.

The final phase of the project, which consists of putting up concrete railings and building the drainage systems and bridge approaches, is already more than 13 percent complete, just slightly ahead of the expected accomplishment rating.

The Tumana Bridge is expected to be finished in February, according to DPWH National Capital Region Director Robert Lala.

The project's contractor is the 310 Construction Specialists Corporation.

According to Lala, the Tumana Bridge that would span the Marikina River would make traveling easier from Quezon City to Marikina, San Mateo and the northeastern areas of Rizal and vice versa.

Without the bridge, motorists going to and from the said cities would have to take a longer route through the Marcos Highway or Katipunan Avenue.

The opening of the bridge would also make crossing the Marikina River safer for motorists because they would not have to pass through the Tumana spillway anymore, the DPWH official added.

A spillway is a channel or passageway through which excess water is diverted.

While the spillway also provides a shortcut for motorists, it is dangerous to use when there are heavy rains, said Lala. In August, an FX taxi driver drowned after his vehicle was swept into the river when he tried to drive it over the submerged spillway.

Manila Water

12-hour water interruption in Mandaluyong, Manila and Makati due to water improvement project

The interconnection of a segment of the ongoing major pipe replacement project called A. Rita Line will cause a temporary water service interruption in portions of Mandaluyong, Manila and Makati from **8:00 p.m., Tuesday, November 29, 2005 up to 8:00 a.m., Wednesday, November 30, 2005.** The activity is part of Manila Water's aggressive water improvement program.

The following areas will experience low water pressure to no water:
Mandaluyong: Brgy. Mabini-J. Rizal, Vergara, Namayan
Manila: Bgy. 892 to 905, Punta, Sta. Ana, Manila and Sta. Ana District, San Andres, Manila
Makati: Bgy. Carmona, Kasilawan, Tejeros, Singkamas, La Paz, San Antonio, Sta. Cruz.
Residents are advised to store enough water prior to the schedule of the water interruptions.

For the latest update, please call our Customer Call Center Hotline at 1627.

Investing in pipelines for the future.

(PDI-November 28, 2005)

Still no change in Wycoco's condition, doctors report

By Margaux C. Ortiz

NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (NBI) Director Reynaldo Wycoco is "still hanging on and fighting for his life" on his fifth day of confinement at the Manila Doctors Hospital Intensive Care Unit.

Supt. Edgar Wycoco, chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group-Western District Office and the NBI director's younger brother, yesterday said the doctors told him that there has been no significant change in his condition.

"We are still hopeful that he will get through this," the younger Wycoco said, adding that the NBI chief's digestive system "has also been working."

His doctors have yet to release another medical bulletin on his condition.

Dr. Dante Morales, the attending physician and MDH medical director, said Wycoco's blood pressure and heart rate became unstable on Friday morning. As a result, they had to postpone plans to conduct a CT scan and electroencephalogram to check the condition of his brain.

Morales had earlier explained that the blood vessel leading to Wycoco's brain was blocked, causing it to burst.

He added that the NBI director's aneurysm was congenital and that "parts of his brain for breathing and circulation were the most affected because of the extensive bleeding."

The NBI chief had just ended a case conference on Wednesday morning when he suddenly collapsed and slipped into a deep coma.

METROBRIEFS

QC to pick gender-friendly film

Quezon City is once again preparing to cite the most gender-friendly film of the year among the entries to the Metro Manila Film Festival (MMFF). The city hands out the annual special award to the film "that best portrays and resolves gender issues and biases, at the same time showing women and men working together toward development." This is the third time that the city will be giving out the "Most Gender-Sensitive Film" award. The winner will be announced during the MMFF awards night in January after the showing of the entries beginning on Christmas Day. The city's board of judges, composed of distinguished men and women in academe, government, gender advocacy and the film industry, has already been formed but their names have yet to be announced, according to the QC public affairs and information service office. The MMFF has its own panel of judges. Last year, the award went to "Aishite Imasu," a film depicting atrocities committed during World War II. The film starred Judy Ann Santos, Raymart Santiago and Dennis Trillo, and was directed by Joel Lamangan for Regal Films. Quezon City's Gender and Development Code provides for the recognition of films that consciously seek to question gender biases in society. *DJ Yap*

Avoid substandard Christmas lights, decor

Spending on firecrackers or decorations for the holidays? Be careful. Just as the coming Christmas season is a time for revelry, it is also a time for residents to be extra careful. Pasig City Fire Marshal Ricardo Perdigon warned that firecrackers and substandard Christmas lights increase the risks of fires so the public should take precautions to ensure their safety. Perdigon advised residents to be cautious in buying Christmas lights. "Residents should avoid buying substandard lights and lanterns. They should look for quality seals from the Department of Trade and Industry in the decors they are buying," he said. Defective firecrackers, on the other hand, could trigger fires, especially if the sparks accidentally fall on houses made of combustible materials like those in urban poor communities. If the houses are built close to each other, the fire could spread rapidly. Perdigon asked community leaders to regulate the use of firecrackers and designate areas where residents could light up pyrotechnics. Firefighters would also be deployed to these areas, he added. Perdigon reminded people who would be leaving their houses unattended during the holidays to make sure their windows are closed so that flying firecrackers would not be able to get in. In December 2004, Pasig City was hit by three small fires triggered by firecrackers, City Fire investigation chief Roberto Samillano said. *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

Indian trader arrested

NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) agents arrested last week an Indian businessman who had issued bouncing checks to another Indian trader. Johnny Chandumal was arrested in a KTV bar in Caloocan City last Monday. NBI Special Task Force chief Reynaldo Esmeralda said there was a warrant for Chandumal's arrest after he failed to pay P258,785 to Verhomal Menghrajani. The money was for the garments the suspect bought from Menghrajani in 1998. Chandumal had issued two Equitable Bank checks for the amount but the bank did not honor the checks. *Margaux C. Ortiz*

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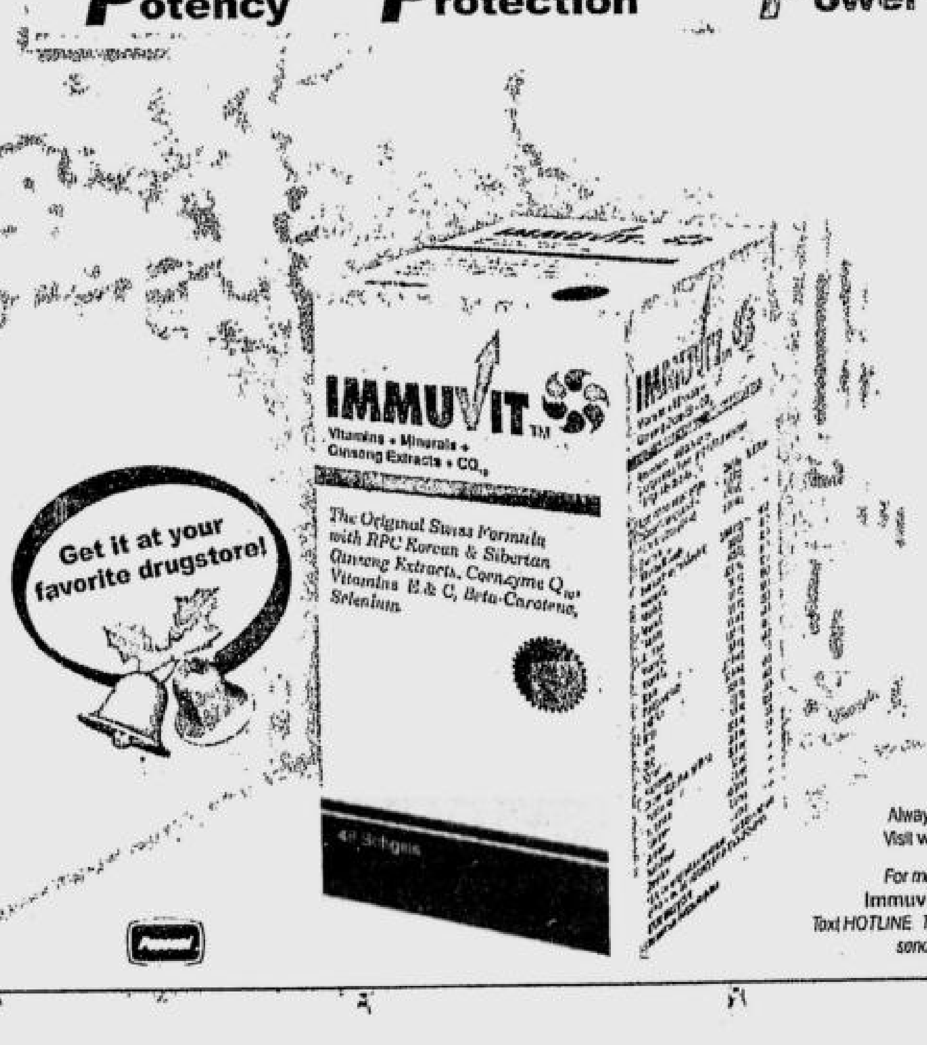
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4. Payments made from November 25 to December 25, 2005 will entitle the subscriber to a FREE month's MSF on the 3rd month of the subscription.
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Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**

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Riot of color ushers in SEAG

Dance and musical magic dazzle as battles commence on all fronts

By Jasmine W. Payo

BRINGING TRADITION AND technology together, the Philippines raised the grand curtain on the biggest sporting event in the region at dusk yesterday.

In an opening ceremony filled with wondrous music, kaleidoscopic festival dances and audio-visual extravaganza, the 23rd Southeast Asian Games unfurled at the rain-soaked grounds of the Quirino Grandstand in Manila.

President Macapagal-Arroyo briefly graced the event and officially opened the biennial meet, which the country previously hosted in 1981 and 1991.

Held in a public park for the first time in the Games' 46-year history, the parade of the Filipino athletes and sports officials—aiming to win the overall crown—drew the loudest cheers during the ceremony.

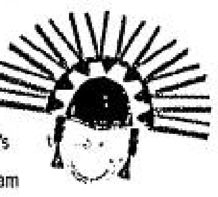
As fireworks lit the sky, RP flag-bearer Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski marched with the 500-strong contingent looking resplendent in their

RIOT/ A28

GOLD, SILVER: Marestela Torres (left) and Lerma Gabito celebrate their 1-2 finish in the long jump. The gold was the Philippines' first in the 23rd SEA Games. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

TODAY'S SCHEDULE

ATHLETICS (***Rizal Memorial Stadium***)
9 a.m.—100-m (decathlon)
9:30 a.m.—Javelin Throw (women's finals); Long Jump (decathlon)
9:45 a.m.—10,000-m Run (women's finals)
11 a.m.—Shot Put (decathlon)
3:30 p.m.—High Jump (decathlon); Javelin Throw (men's finals); Long Jump (men's finals)
3:45 p.m.—100-m Hurdles (W finals)
4:15 p.m.—100-m (M finals)
4:30 p.m.—100-m (W finals)
4:45 p.m.—800-m (M finals)
4:55 p.m.—800-m (W finals)



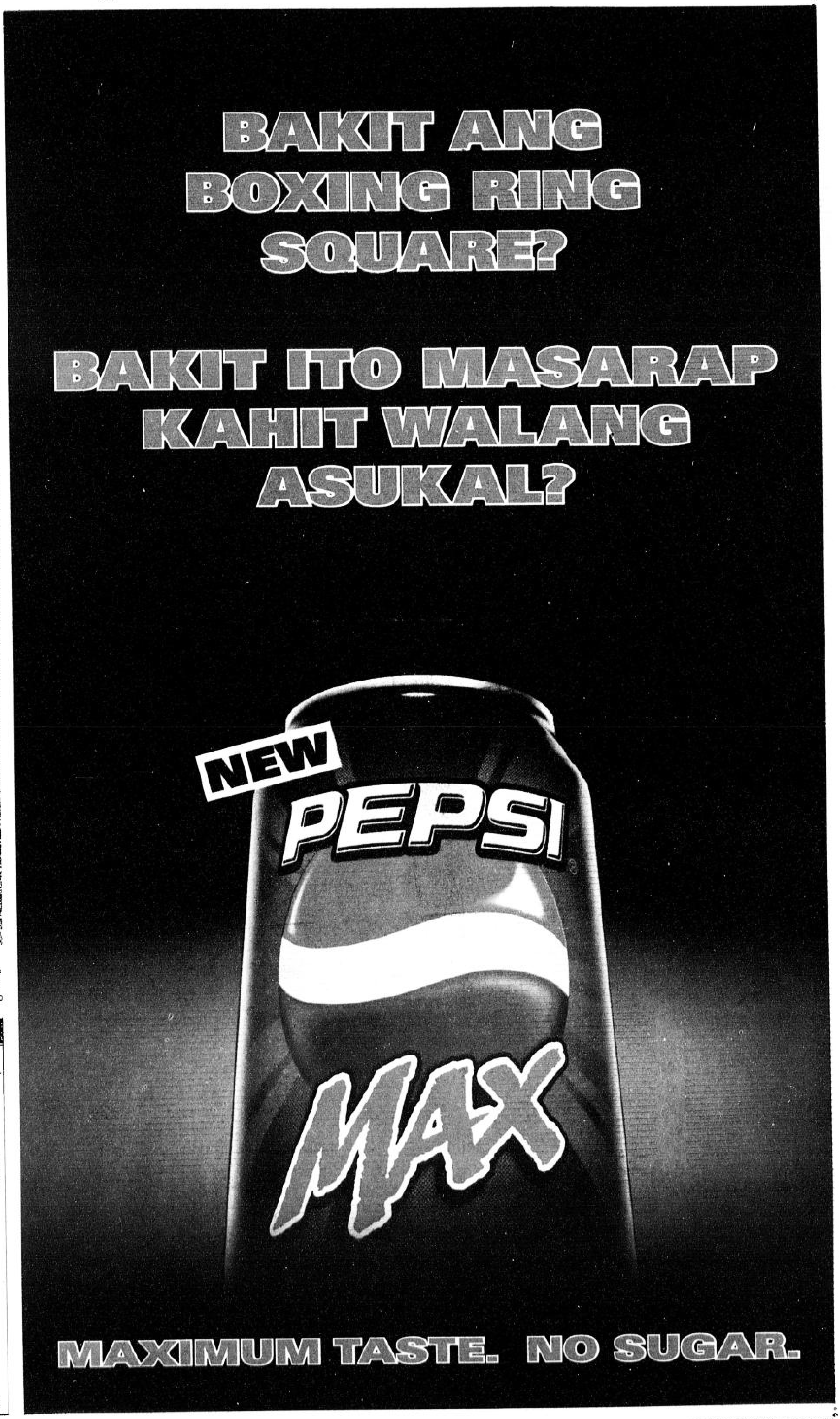
BADMINTON
(***PhilSports Arena***)
6 p.m.—RP vs. Indonesia (women's team quarterfinals);
6 p.m.—Thailand vs. RP (men's team quarterfinals)

BASEBALL (***Rizal Memorial Baseball Stadium***)
10 30 a m.—RP vs Malaysia (men's elimination)

BILLIARDS AND SNOOKER (***Makati Coliseum***)
10 a.m.—8-Ball Doubles (men's quarterfinals)
1 p.m.—8-Ball Doubles (men's semis); Snooker Team (bronze)
4 p.m.—One Cushion Carom Single men's preliminary/quarters); Snooker Team (men's finals)
7 p.m.—8-Ball Pool Doubles (bronze match); One Cushion Carom Single (men's preliminary/quarterfinals); 8-Ball Pool Doubles (men's finals)

FENCING (***San Juan Gymnasium***)
10 a.m.—Individual Epee (women's preliminary)
10 a.m.—Individual Sabre (women's preliminary)
1:15 p.m.—Individual Epee (women's elimination)
1:15 p.m.—Individual Sabre (women's elimination)
2:15 p.m.—Individual Sabre (woman's finals)
2:15 p.m.—Individual Epee (women's finals)
3:30 p.m.—Individual Epee (men's preliminary)
5:45 p.m.—Individual Epee (men's direct elimination)
6.45 p.m.—Individual Epee (men's finals)

SCHEDULE/ A28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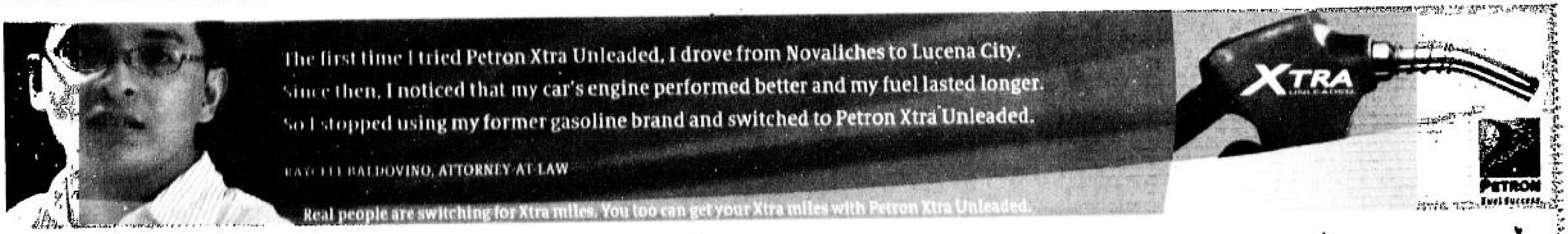
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Gold for Filipino divers, but Malaysians snare 2

By Marc Anthony Reyes

LOS BAÑOS, LAGUNA—THE PHILIPPINES' Shiela Mae Perez and Ceseil Domenios came up with the first gold in diving by ruling the women's 3-meter springboard synchronized event yesterday in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games at the Trace Aquatics Center here.

Athens Olympic veteran Perez and Domenios, silver medalists in the Asian Diving Cup held in Hunan, China, and bronze medalists in the 2003 Vietnam SEAG, tallied 260 points to clinch their first Games gold.

Thailand's Sukrutai Tommaoros and Supapan Prasertkwan (239.40) took the silver, nipping Malaysia's Leong Mun Yee and Cheong Jun Hoong (238.11).

But Malaysia stole the limelight by seizing the day's two other golds through Yeoh Ken Nee in the men's 1-meter individual springboard and Mun Yee and Jun Hoong in the women's 10-meter synchronized event.

Zardo Domenios, Ceseil's older brother, added a bronze medal for the Filipinos in the men's 1-meter springboard. Fil-Am Victor Paguia Jr. settled for fifth.

Also an Olympic veteran, Zardo placed third with 340.17 points behind Malaysia's Yeoh, who won with 387.99, and Thailand's Suchart Pichi (362.25).

Mun Yee and Jun Hoong ruled the 10-meter synchronized event with 258.99, beating Vietnam's Hoang Thane and Tranguyen Anh (223.68) and Thailand's Tommaoros and Neeranuch Chantrakulcholtsea (214.26).

Perez and Domenios, who lost the gold to the host Chinese in the Asian Diving Cup, led all the way through five rounds, blowing the competition away in their fourth attempt—a backward 2 ½ sommersault tuck position—which earned them the highest score of 62.16 points from the nine judges.

"We were not expecting the gold, *pero nung natapos namin yung* fourth dive *na hindi namin lagi nape*-perfect, *lumakas na ang loob namin* (when we finished the fourth dive which we've never perfected before, we got very confident)," said Perez, who is turning 20 on Dec. 10.

"*Kinikilabutan ako* (I get goose bumps)," added the Tibungco, Davao, native who has been competing since she was nine. "*Yung* cheer *ng tao talagang nagpalakas ng loob namin dito* (the crowd really boosted our morale)."

Domenios, 16, said they weren't aware that they were leading since the first attempt.

The Filipinos opened with 45 points in their first dive as against 43.8s of the Malaysian and Thai pair.

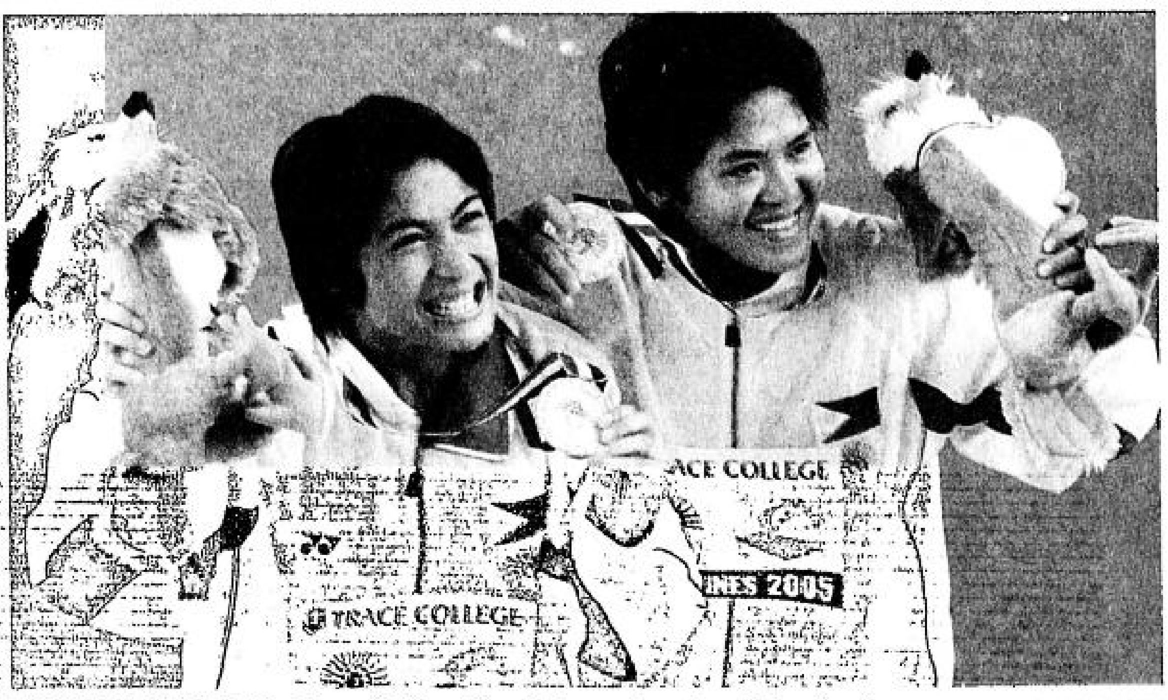
The Thais tied them with 45 points in the second attempt, an inward ½ sommersault, before the RP tandem padded their lead with 52.56 points in the third attempt which featured a forward 1 ½ sommersault pike.

"The fourth dive, I was surprised," said coach Rommel Kong. "They don't usually perform that dive smoothly during practices."

Domenios actually hit the water slightly ahead of Perez, but the judges noted their smooth entry which the jampacked crowd of about 3,000 celebrated with a roar.

Perez and Domenios will take part in the 3-meter springboard individual today, hoping to duplicate their feat against each other.

Malaysia led the first day of diving with two golds and a bronze, with the Philippines second with a gold and a bronze. Thailand had two silvers and bronze, while Vietnam has a silver to show. *With a report from Don Eric Sta. Rosa*



VICTORIOUS: Shiela Mae Perez (left) and Seceil Domenios acknowledge the cheers. EDWIN BACASMAS

Ex-coin diver emerges with gold medal

By Marc Anthony Reyes

LOS BAÑOS—HER DIVES HARDLY CREATE A ripple and that's why she's making a big splash in the 23rd SEA Games competitions here.

Diminutive Shiela Mae Perez, the other half of the 3-meter springboard synchronized golden pair, is expected to be the backbone of the Philippine campaign especially with her favorite events —the 1-meter springboard individual and 3-meter springboard individual—coming up.

"I didn't expect to win the gold here but now I have it in my hands," said the 19-year-old Perez.

She won silver medals in the 3-meter springboard in the past two SEA Games and is now favored to finallly dominate here.

It has been a long way since Perez was discovered by a Chinese coach diving for coins in the Davao City pier more than 10 years ago.

"The coach saw us and said *puwede, puwede to sa* diving," recalled the bedimpled Perez.

She started competing at the age of nine, winning the gold medal in the inaugural Philippine National Games in 1996. From there, she went on to compete abroad.

"*Nanalo rin ng* gold *at lumabas rin ang tunay na talento niya*," said coach Rommel Kong.

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SEA Games MEDAL TALLY

Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Singapore	1	0	1
Philippines	5	5	4
Malaysia	5	2	3
Brunei	0	0	0
Cambodia	0	0	0
Indonesia	0	0	0
Laos	0	0	0
Myanmar	0	0	1
Thailand	0	2	5
Timor Leste	0	0	0
Vietnam	1	4	3

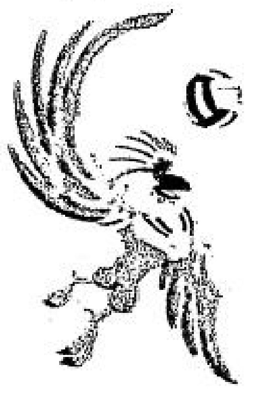
Volleybelles rip Singapore in 64 mins

By Christian Irl Tan, *PDI Visayas Bureau*

BACOLOD CITY—THE PHILIPPINES ENCOUNtered little resistance in claiming its first win in the Southeast Asian Games women's volleyball tournament at the jampacked West Negros College Gym here yesterday.

With skipper Roxanne Pimentel, Michelle Carolino and Cherry Macatangay coming up with stellar performances on both ends, the RP volleybelles, bronze medalists in Vietnam two years ago, handily dispatched Singapore, 25-9, 25-16, 25-20, in 64 minutes to draw first blood in the five-team tournament.

Despite the convincing win, RP coach Ramil de Jesus said his team has yet to play true to form.



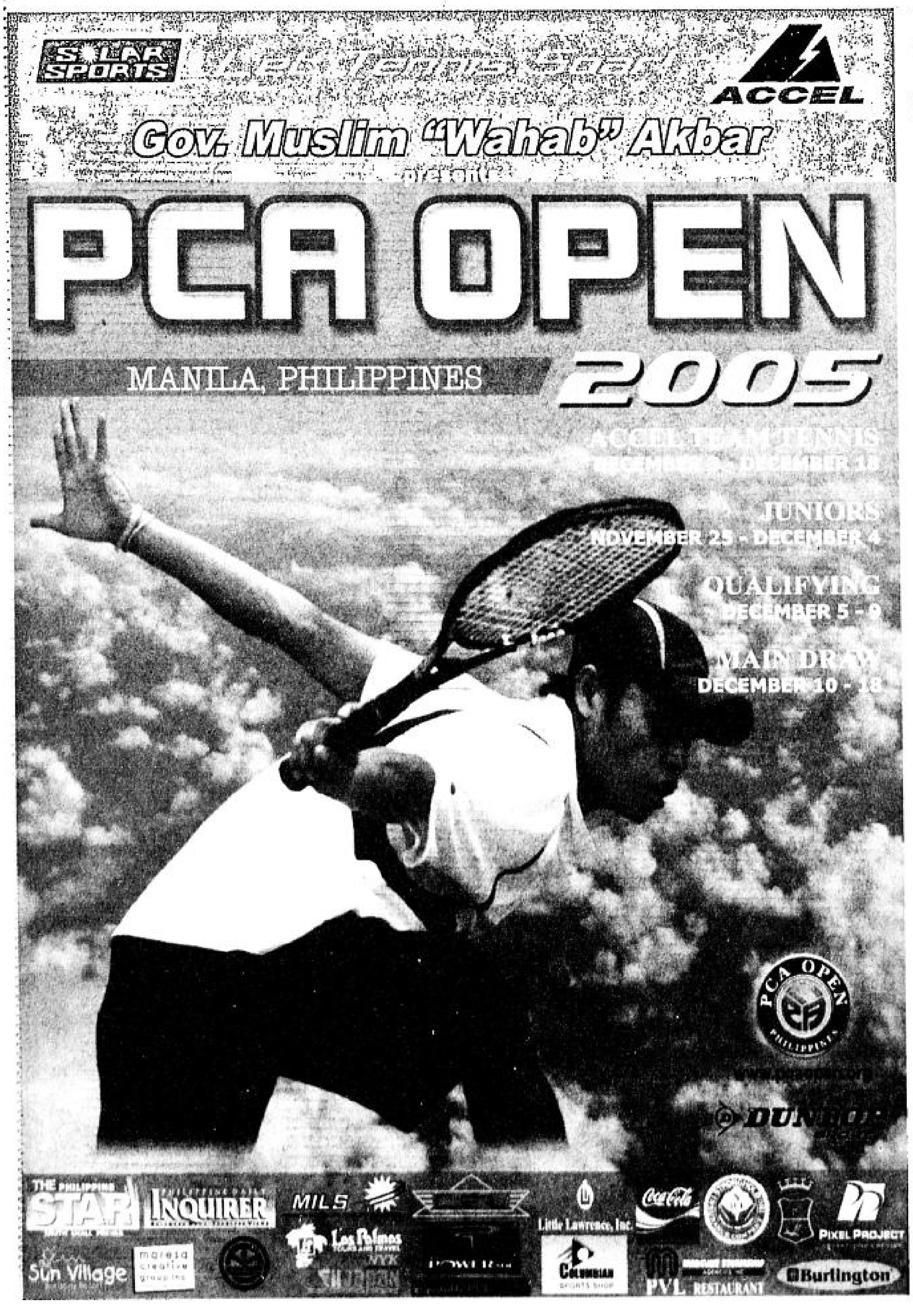
"We did not show off our plays because some teams are scouting us, but I think we sent a strong statement," said de Jesus, who formed the squad eight months ago.

A beneficiary of Cristina Salak's fine setting, Carolino posted 15 points on 12 kills, while the 6-foot-1 Pimentel and Macatangay contributed 13 and 11, respectively for the Filipinos, who are hoping to win their first gold after their victory in Singapore 12 years ago.

The Singaporeans, led by Siew Yee Chang, made their move in the third frame, taking a 13-7 lead, before Carolino came up with an ace and a winner from the backline to spark the Philippines' comeback that had the 3,500 spectators roaring.

The Philippines played with two key players not 100 percent as Maureen Penetrante and Amelie Guanco are still recovering from knee surgery and a back injury, respectively.

"What gives us this victory is No.1, our bonding and next, is our good blocking and receiving," said de Jesus, whose wards also outblocked the Singaporeans, 74-46.



Filipino SEA Games medalists

GOLD MEDAL

—Marestella Torres, long jump, 6.47 meters; (2nd: L. Balaultan-Gabito, 6.45m)

— Shiela Mae Perez and Cesell Domenios, 3-meter synchro springboard, 260.16 points; (2nd: S. Tommaoros and S. Prasertkwan(Thai), 239.40 points)

— Michael Mendoza and Belinda Adora (Latin American dance)

— Rico Rosima and Filomena Salvador (Standard dance)

— Ronato Alcano (15-ball rotation single)

SILVER MEDAL

— Men's water polo team

— Lerma Balaultan-Gabito, long jump, 6.45 meters

— John Erolle Melencio and Dearlie Gerodias (Latin American dance)

— Emmanuel Reyes and Maira Rosete (Standard dance)

— Antonio Gabica (15-ball rotation single)

BRONZE MEDAL

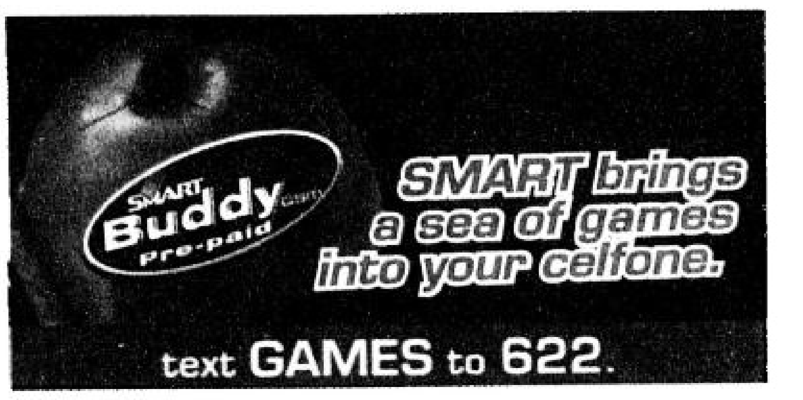
—Zardo Domenios, 1-m springboard, 340.17 points

— Men's kumite team (Bernardino Chu, Joey Torrebillas, and Bong Toribio)

— Noel Espinosa (men's individual kata)

— Stephanie Lim (women's individual kata)

Compiled by: **Eric C. Abenojar**



Torre gains; Antonio falls

TAGAYTAY CITY—FILIPINO GRANDMASTER Eugene Torre survived, but GM Joey Antonio fell by the wayside yesterday in the individual rapid chess competition of the 23rd Southeast Asian Games at the Tagaytay International Convention Center here.

Torre beat Fide Master Le Quang Liem of Vietnam in game two to enter the semifinals, 1.5-0.5, even as Antonio bowed to Indon GM Susanto Megaranto, 0.5-1.5.

The 54-year-old Torre showed his expertise with the black pieces and used his pet Old Indian Defense to beat teen-age sensation Le Quang Liem. They ended their first match in a 72-move draw of a Trompovsky Opening.

The third-seeded Torre, the 2003 SEA Games double gold medalist, will face second seed Vietnamese GM Nguyen Ngoc Truong Son, who blanked GM Wu Shaobin of Singapore, 2-0, in another quarterfinal duel.

Antonio dropped his first match against Megaranto and was unable to exact victory in game two.

Megaranto will tangle with Malaysian IM Jason Goh, who shocked top seed IM Wynn Zaw Htun of Myanmar, 1.5-0.5.

Despite Antonio's loss, RP men's team coach Samuel Estimo remains confident that Torre can deliver the first chess gold for the Philippines. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

Sailors looking for good wind

WITH ITS LAST SEA GAMES GOLD MEDAL coming in Singapore 12 years ago, Philippine sailing is aching to restore lost glory when action unfolds today at the Subic Bay Yacht club.

Eighty-four athletes from six nations will contest the 12 gold medals at stake in the event, which also marks the start of SEAG competition at the former American naval base.

Up for grabs are golds in the Optimist boys and girls; International 420 boys, girls, and open; International 470 men and girls; Laser; Laser Radial; Hobie 16; Neil Pryde RS:X; and Formula.

The Philippines and Thailand are competing in all classes and sending the biggest delegations, with the maximum allowed 22 athletes each. Singapore is also competing in all classes despite sending only 18 athletes.

Heats start at 11 a.m.

The sport returns to the SEAG calendar following its absence in Vietnam in 2003. In the 2001 Games, the Philippines produced only one silver medal courtesy of Rommel Chavez and Ridealy Balladares in the 470. Chavez and Balladares will be competing again at Subic. *Jose Paolo Lacdao*

RP netters go for gold vs Indons today

By Musong R. Castillo

CECIL MAMIIT IS HAVING A WONDERFUL time, and he's giving the Philippines a grand ride.

Mamiit clinched the Philippines' semifinal match with Thailand with a 6-2, 6-4 victory over Sonchat Ratiwatana yesterday that boosted the men's tennis team into the finals of the 23rd Southeast Asian Games against Indonesia today.

Fellow Fil-American Eric Taino had a tougher time earlier against Sonchat's twin brother, Sanchai, needing a deciding set to prevail, 3-6, 6-3, 6-1, in two hours and 18 minutes under the scorching midday heat at the Rizal Memorial hardcourts.

ERIC Taino rallies to foil Thai Sanchai Ratiwatana KARL SUMBELING

Indonesia advanced after a 2-1 victory over darkhorse Vietnam, with ageless Suwandi Suwandi figuring prominently in the two victories.

Suwandi lost just one game in ripping Quang Huy Ngo, 6-1, 6-0, before teaming up in the doubles with Bonit Wiryawan in a 7-6 (9-7), 7-6 (7-4) decision that finished at dusk because of several rain delays.

No. 2 Minh Quan Do scored the only Vietnam win, coming from behind to nip Prima Simpatiaji, 4-6, 7-6 (7-5), 7-6 (7-4), in the second singles.

Mamiit served aces, fired forehand winners with precision and danced the jig after great shots to the delight of the huge gallery that applauded and appreciated every Philippine point.

"I was very excited I couldn't sleep half of the time last night," said Mamiit, whose victory assured the Philippines of at least a silver in the event. "I knew I was going to receive a lot of love, a lot of support today."

And Mamiit rewarded the crowd with a dazzling display of tennis, giving the country new hope of a dominating performance in the event despite the setback suffered by the ladies' team Saturday at the hands of Indonesia.

"I enjoy the atmosphere. I love it. My countrymen have embraced me and Eric (Taino) as their own," Mamiit said.

Mamiit was never in trouble against Sonchat as his serve bailed him out a number of times and his solid baseline game giving him break opportunities when the situation called for it.

Mamiit raced to a 4-0 lead in the first set and established his character quickly. He then broke Sonchat at 15 with a forehand down the line to take a 3-2 lead in the second set.

He then fired five of his 10 aces in his next two service games and had the Thai for the taking by building a 40-love lead in the 10th and final game with two service winners and a half volley.

The left-handed Taino, also a regular in the money-rich ATP Tour like Mamiit, held at love in the second game of the decider before giving up only 12 points in the last five games against Sanchai. *With a report from Apolinario Mapacpac*

CECIL Mamiit celebrates with the gallery after downing Thailand's Sonchat Ratiwatana in straight sets. KARL SUMBELING

Filipino jins confident of routing field

THE PHILIPPINES HAS NOT WON THE Southeast Asian Games taekwondo overall title in recent years.

But with a team of Olympians, college stars and promising young talents, the overall crown may not be as elusive for the Filipinos when the competition kicks off today at the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay City.

"I believe all 16 Filipino jins are capable (of topping their divisions)," head coach Stephen Fernandez said. "I just don't know how many golds we can win."

"Most of my players are young, in fact, 10 of the 16 members are still in school. But they're definitely not inexperienced."

Defending champions Donald Geisler, Dax Alberto Morfe, Veronica Domingo and Mary Antoinette Rivero are back to fuel the RP bid for the overall championship.

Aside from the veterans, Fernandez is looking at varsity standouts Jeff Figueroa, Tshomlee Go and Alexander Briones to secure golds in the men's division.

Reigning UAAP MVP Briones, a silver medalist two years ago, is looking to wrest the welterweight gold. Figueroa and Go will see action in the flyweight and bantamweight divisions, respectively. *Karla Tricia V. Magno*

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Well-honed boxers hope to duplicate '91 title romp

BACOLOD CITY—AMID FEARS OF BIASED officiating, the 23rd Southeast Asian Games boxing tournament gets going today at the University of St. La Salle Coliseum here.

Loaded with international exposure, the Philippine boxing team yesterday declared its readiness to reclaim its lofty status as Southeast Asia's best from defending champion Thailand.

Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines president Manny Lopez expressed confidence that the RP pugs can duplicate their victory during the 1991 SEA Games in Manila, where the Philippines won eight gold medals.

"They're in good shape. *Maganda ang mood nang bawat isa at handa nang sumabak sa laban* (They're in a good fighting mood and raring to go)," Lopez said.

Fourteen gold medals are at stake this time, nine of them in the men's division.

The first-round pairings have yet to be determined pending the draw and the final weigh-in at 8 this morning at the USLS Coliseum. Action starts with the women's competition at 5 p.m.

Thailand women's boxing coach Raiman Boonthom had earlier expressed concern that the judging might go the Philippines' way, but Lopez allayed fears of biased officiating Saturday night. *Cedelf Tupas, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Filipino wushu bets out to dethrone Viets

THE PHILIPPINE WUSHU TEAM SETS ASIDE its heartbreak in the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games in 2003 as it guns for the sport's overall crown starting today until Wednesday at the Emilio Aguinaldo College Sports and Cultural Center in Manila.

Lester Pimentel, the RP team captain who won a gold medal in the 1995 SEAG edition in Chiang Mai, Thailand, said they are ready to ditch their bridesmaid tag this time.

With a squad spearheaded by Pimentel and former world champions Arvin Ting, Richard Ng, Willy Wang in the taolu (form) competition and Eduardo Folayang, Dolly Andres and Rene Catalan in sanshou (combat), the RP team will try to return the favor to reigning titlist and perennial rival Vietnam.

Ronel Andaliza, silver medalist in the national championship, is the team's lone rookie.

"We have the advantage this year because of the returning world champions, and familiarity with the venue," said Pimentel.

Twenty one gold medals are at stake in wushu—the fifth biggest in terms of gold medals to be won among the 41 sports in the SEAG calendar. Vietnam ruled wushu two years ago with 13 golds. *Llanesca T. Panti*

TODAY'S SCHEDULE

SHOOTING-PISTOL AND RIFLE/PRACTICAL (*PSC-PNSA Shooting Range, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig*)
9 a.m.—50m Pistol 60 shots (men's finals)
9 a.m.—Practical O Pistol Event (men's finals)
9 a.m.—Practical O Pistol Event (women's finals)
9 a.m.—10m Air Pistol 40 shots (women's finals)

SHOOTING-TRAP/SKEET (*PNSA Clay Target Range, Muntinlupa City*)
9 a.m.—Trap 75 targets (women's finals)
9 a.m.—Trap 75 targets (men's finals)

TABLE TENNIS (*Ninoy Aquino Stadium*)
9 a.m.—Thailand vs. RP (M stage 1)
9 a.m.—Thailand vs. RP (W Group B semis)
2 p.m.—Myanmar vs. RP (W Group B semis)

TAEKWONDO (*Cuneta Astrodome*)
1 p.m.—Flyweight (elimination/semis)
1 p.m.—Lightweight (elimination/semis)
7 p.m.—Flyweight (finals)
7 p.m.—Lightweight (finals)

TENNIS (*Rizal Memorial Tennis Center*)
9 a.m.—Indonesia vs. Philippines (men's team finals)

WOMEN'S FOOTBALL (*Marikina Sports Center*)
6:30 p.m.—Vietnam vs. RP

WUSHU (*Emilio Aguinaldo College Gym*)
9 a.m.—Taolu Nanquan (men's eliminations/finals)
9 a.m.—Taolu Gunshu (women's elimination/finals)
2:30 p.m.—Sanshou (56, 60, 70 kg men's QF)
7:30 p.m.—Taolu Jianshu (men's eliminations/finals)
7:30 p.m.—Taolu Nanquan (women's elims/finals)
7:30 p.m.—Taolu Daoshu (men's elims/finals)

AQUATICS-DIVING (*Trace College, Laguna*)
10:25 a.m.—3-m Synchronized Springboard (men's)
3 p.m.—3-m Individual Springboard (women's)
4:30 p.m.—10-m Synchronized Platform (men's)

SAILING (*Subic Yacht Club*)
11 a.m.—Hobie Cat (open); Int'l 420 (open); Neil Pryde RX:S
11:05 a.m.—International 420 (boys); 470 (men); Formula Class (women)
11:10 a.m.—International 420 (girls); International 470 (women); Optimist (boys)
11:15 a.m.—Laser (open); Optimist (girls)
11:20 a.m.—Laser Radial (open)

CHESS (*Tagaytay International Convention Center*)
8:30 a.m.—Rapid Singles (men's rounds of 16 game 1)
9:45 a.m.—Rapid Singles (men's rounds of 16 game 2)
1 p.m.—Rapid Singles (men's quarterfinals game 1)
2:15 p.m.—Rapid Singles (men's q'finals game 2)
5:00 p.m.—Rapid Singles (men's semis game 1)

CYCLING (*Danao City, Cebu*)
9 a.m.—Downhill (men's and women's seeding run)
1:30 p.m.—Downhill (men's and women's finals)

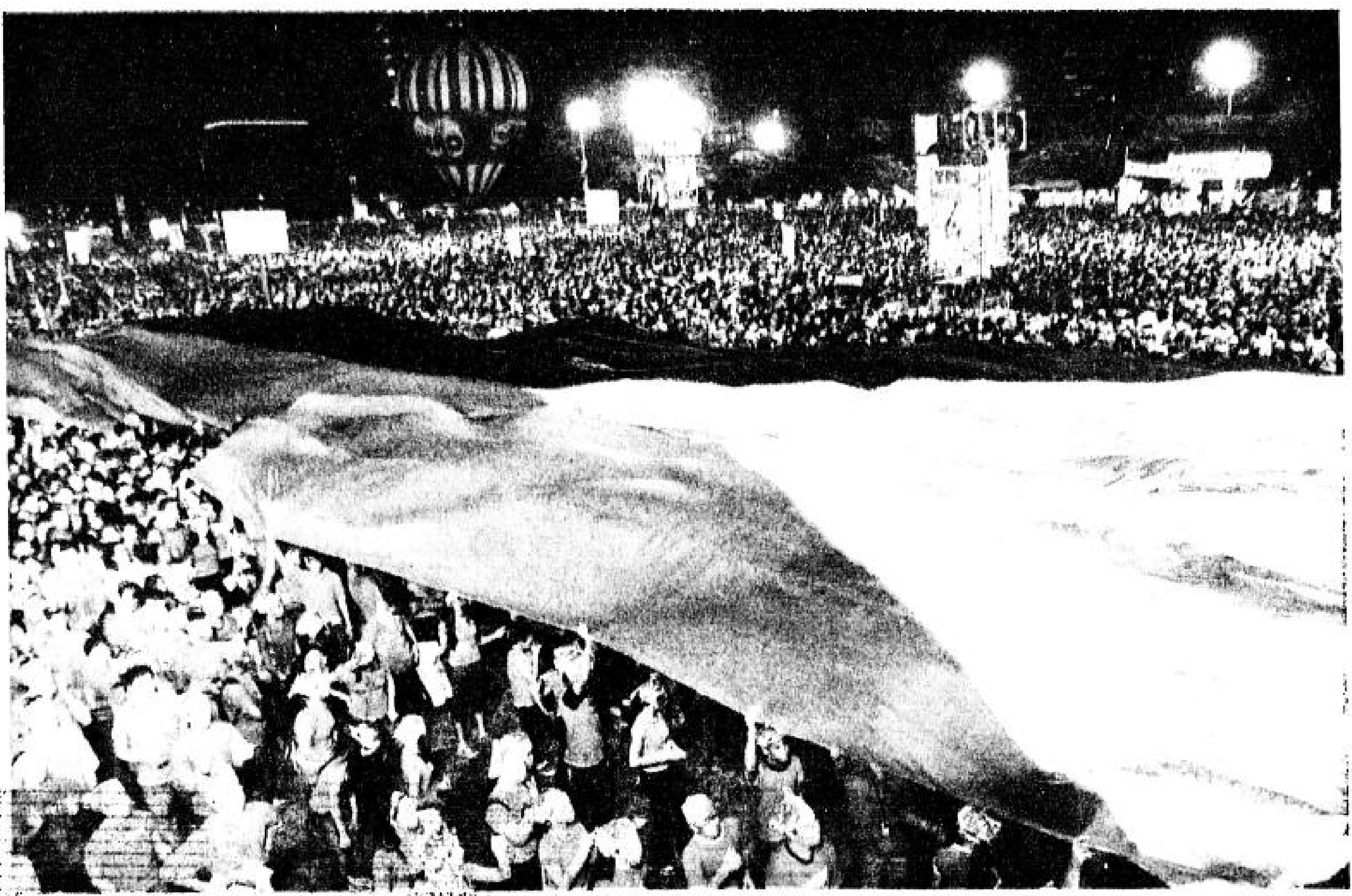
KARATE-DO (*Mandaue Coliseum, Mandaue City*)
9 a.m.—Individual Kumite +60 kg (women's finals), Individual Kumite +75 kg (men's finals); Team Kata (finals)
1 p.m.—Individual Kumite -53, -60, -70 kg (W finals)
1 p.m.—Individual Kumite -70, -75 kg (men's finals)

SEPAK TAKRAW (*University of San Carlos Gym, Cebu City*)
8 a.m.—Hoop Takraw (women's elimination)
1 p.m.—Hoop Takraw (men's elimination)

BOXING (*Univ. of St. La Salle Coliseum, Bacolod*)
2 p.m.—Men's and women's elimination

MEN'S FOOTBALL (*Bacolod City Sports Complex/Panaad Stadium, Bacolod*)
5 p.m.—Singapore vs. Myanmar (*Bacolod City Sports Complex*)
5 p.m.—Indonesia vs. Laos (*Panaad Stadium*)

VOLLEYBALL (*West Negros College Gym, Bacolod*)
4:30 p.m.—RP vs. Indonesia (women's preliminary)



THE NATIONAL flag is borne by hundreds of students during yesterday's opening ceremonies at the Quirino Grandstand. EDWIN BACASMAS

Riot of colors, dance, music ushers in SEAG

From page A25

royal blue and red *barong tagalogs* and *salakots*.

The rites, austere compared to other nations' past hosting, opened with the parade of the huge RP flag borne by 20 Sienna College Boy Scouts. But the cheers came when the country's all-time best athletes trooped the grounds.

Manny Pacquiao, escorted by 2005 Miss International Precious Lara Quigaman and actress Angel Locsin, remained a crowd favorite.

But it was also a momentous sight seeing the Filipino boxing idol with four-time world bowling champion Paeng Nepomuceno, Asia's former fastest woman Lydia de Vega-Mercado, Olympic boxing silver medalist Onyok Velasco, former pro basketball sensation Allan Caidic, SEAG swim star Eric Buhain, sharpshooter Tac Padilla, taekwondo ace Monsour del Rosario, long jump queen Elma Muros-Posadas, badminton Olympian Weena Lim and bemedaled swimmer Akiko Thompson.

"I'm very honored and excited," said Cojuangco-Jaworski hours before the ceremony.

"It's an honor that they still remember us," added Thompson. "I really enjoyed just going around and promoting the SEA Games. I'm so touched to be included in the opening ceremony. It brings back a lot of memories."

"I'm proud to be standing alongside the greatest athletes the Philippine has ever produced in sports," said del Rosario.

Equestrienne Toni Leviste, mounted on her horse, handed the Games' torch to teen taekwondo Olympian Antoinette Rivero at the Rizal monument.

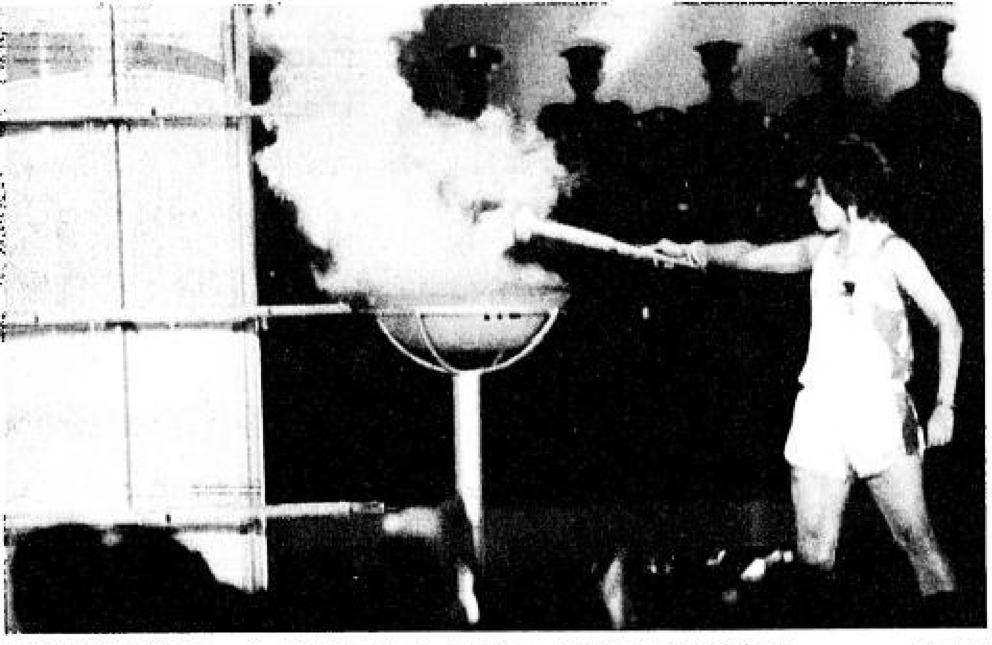
Rivero, whose bravery in the 2004 Athens Olympics endeared her to the public, ran a stretch along Roxas Boulevard before lighting the Games' Sacred Fire at the Grandstand.

The Filipinos' spirited display of musical talent enthralled the audience right from the start.

After the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra and San Miguel Master Chorale—under the baton of maestro Ryan Cayabyab—played the Philippine national anthem, the Bayanihan Dance Company and the *ati-atihan* by the Jocson Tribe performed a colorful suite of tribal and folk dances from the country's different isregions.

The lively festival music and dance paved the way for the parade of athletes and sports officials from 11 countries competing in the nine-day Games.

The member-nations marched alphabetically in order of appearance, with delegates from Brunei coming in first, followed by Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand, Timor Leste and Vietnam.



TAEKWONDO Olympian Marie Antoinette Rivero lights the SEAG flame. RYAN LIM

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo declares the Games open in brief remarks. LYN RILLON

But the host nation naturally had the grandest entrance as gold-painted *ati-atihan* dancers performed before the Philippine team joined the other contingents.

The centerpiece of the production number was a fusion of pyrotechnics, audio-visual effects and performances by acclaimed dance troupes such as the Bayanihan Dance Company, Hotlegs, Dancemasters and Tony Fabella Dance Group.

The presentation, which carried the "One Heritage, One Southeast Asia" theme, told the story of a Southeast Asian boy's journey in all 11 countries and his discovery of their common heritage. Singer Bayang Barrios portrayed Mother Earth.

Nine-year-old soprano Julia Abueva, granddaughter of National Artist Napoleon Abueva, sang the Games' theme "We're All Just One"

The original piece was composed by award-winning singer and songwriter Jose Mari Chan and written by renowned lyricist Rene Nieva.

The RP delegates' ramie linen barong, which reflected the colors of the Philippine flag, was designed by international designer Eric Pineda, while the salakots were made of *nito* fiber manufactured in Romblon.

The ceremony closed with a rollicking ensemble performance by popular band Rivermaya and the San Miguel Philharmonic.

Other top officials who graced the event were Vice President Noli de Casto, former President Fidel V. Ramos, First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, cabinet official Obet Pagdanganan and Philippine SEAG Organizing Committee head Jose "Peping" Cojuangco.

According to police officials, the event drew abou 500,000 people, mostly Manila residents.

"We hope our athletes do well, just keep on, win or lose," said Juvima Silena of Pasay, who watched the event with her family.

"I'm here to support the athletes," said 22-year-old Ryan Ramos, a computer technician. "I hope our athletes will give their best shot and go for the overall championship." *With reports from Reuben Ezra Terrado and Elaine Gonda, Contributors*

Tor

2 SEA G

By Musong R. Castillo

**GETTING ONE FINAL PUS
her resolve, tiny Marestel
athletics gold in the 23rd
ma Balauitan-Gabito and
expected nothing less.**
Torres soared to a distance
ters on her sixth and final try
passing Balauitan-Gabito's 6.4
the women's long jump gold
Memorial Stadium.
But the Filipinos were shu
two other final events won by
in record fashions. And as exp
were humbled in the heats of
ter dash.
Rosalinda Samsu of Malays
the old women's pole vault rec
effort of 4.10 meters and Vietn
Nhong also established a new
in the women's high jump,
one try at 1.89 meters to win th
countryman Nguyen Thi Ngo
cleared 1.86 in her third try.
The expected head-to-hea
tween the country's crack ju
filled with drama.
The favored Torres fouled
first five tries and cried unaba
the athletes' tent in the field wi
left with only one attempt.
But with the crowd egging
step on the runway, Torres ca

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By Cedelf Tupas
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—SUBSTITUT
Soleb struck the game-winn
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were forced to toil for the sec
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semis seat in Group A on Tuesd
A win by the RP booters, w
Cambodia, 4-2, will see them
the semifinals, but a draw w
catastrophic since the Malays
better goal difference of four
pared to RP's one.
Inserted into the lineup for
Teeratep Winothai in the s
Soleb made most out of the
meeting midfielder Sochao

Do or die

IT'S ANOTHER MUST-WIN M
the Philippine lady booters at t
when they take on defendin
Vietnam in the women's footb
tion of the 23rd SEA Games at
na Sports Park.
The RP women's squad wil
rely on defenders Andrea Yan
Rubio, the 2003 women's Foot
Year. Fil-Ams Angeline and Pa
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attack together with speedy a
er Edna Agravante and Clariss
Tournament leader Myanm
Thailand in the first game at 4

Big dance sweep; karate debacl

By Francis Ochoa

CEBU CITY—UNDER THE TEMPERED HUE of soft ballroom lights, the country's dancers flaunted their own medley of colors that came in just two tones: Gold, silver, gold, silver.

Fielding four pairs fanned out in two different categories, the Philippines scored an emphatic sweep in the dancesport competitions yesterday, gracefully hacking out a pair of 1-2 finishes in the 23rd Southeast Asian Games at the grand ballroom of the Water Front Hotel.

"We have absolutely cemented our niche as the best in Southeast Asia," said DanceSport Council of the Philippines president Becky Garcia.

The two gold medals, sweetened by a pair of silver ones, was more than enough to make up for the defeat earlier in the day suffered by the country's karatedo squad, which was left shellshocked—but nevertheless harboring unbridled optimism—after getting waylaid at the start of its bid to claim the overall crown.

Michael Mendoza and Belinda Agora, performing in front of fellow Cebuanos, swung, swayed and cut through the dancefloor on the way to the gold in the Latin American category.

They could have missed a step or skipped a beat and the Philippine squad, whose training was funded by San Miguel Corp., would hardly have been affected—finishing second was another Filipino couple, John Erolle Melencio and 19-year-old Dearlie Gerodias.

The rest of the eight-nation field was left to battle for the bronze, with Thais Watchakorn Suasee and Warapa Jumbala taking it.

But the country just wasn't done yet.

In the Standard category, Rico Rosima and Filomena Salvador stormed off with the gold medal while compatriots Emmanuel Reyes and Maira Rosete bagged the silver. Thailand, whose long training in England gave the Philippine contingent the shakes before the start of the competition, took the bronze courtesy of Pawatpong Ratcha-apai and Chanawan Potimu.

The euphoria that swept through the Philippine delegation here after the dance victories toned down the disappointment over the karatekas' performance at the Mandaue City sports complex, where a loud audience went as far as cheering each athlete by their nicknames in an effort to boost their spirits.

But ranged against defending champion Vietnam, an edgy women's kumite team spearheaded by national team standout Gretchen Malalad failed to get anything going and crashed out right in its first match.

"I really don't know what happe
the statuesque Malalad, who wore th
someone who did not know what hit
knew at the start that we could beat th
just did not get the breaks to go our wa
Juan Carlos Veguillas, one of the b
coaches handling the team, had a bett
nation: "We allowed them (Vietnames
ahead of us. Once they did, it was
changed game plans in the middle
match and we could no longer get a
going."
"The team is strong, but the players
a bit tense playing before their ho
fans," said Italian head coach Romano
pi. "We'll try to bounce back in the in
events because that's what we're really
forward to."
The women's squad were denied

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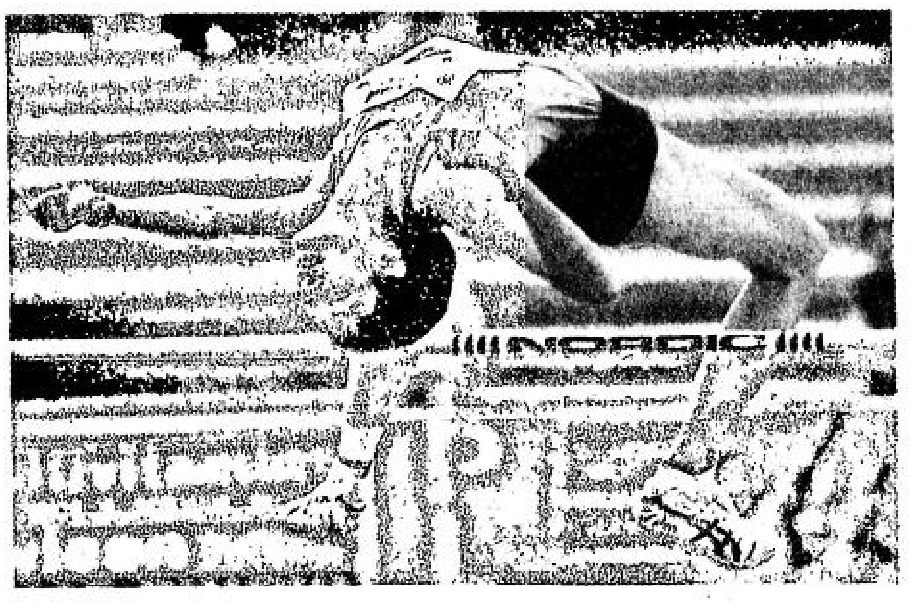
res captures gold on last jump

ames records fall



VIETNAM'S Bui Thi Nhong clears the bar at a record 1.89 meters. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

H FROM THE CROWD AND DIGGING DEEP INTO la Torres yesterday leapt for the first Philippine Southeast Asian Games, nipping teammate Ler- sparking a wild celebration from a throng that

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the first golden leap of her SEAG career.

A gracious Balauitan-Gabito hugged her tight for several seconds in the center of the field when the official measurement came, a poignant moment which Filipino fans hope will come aplenty with still 42 gold medals in athletics left to be disputed.

"I am just so happy," Torres, a 25-year-old farmer's daughter from San Jose town in Negros Oriental, said in Filipino. "I thought I wouldn't win anymore because I was not playing my usual game."

Torres said the unusual bounce on the newly refurbished runway distorted her timing.

Her only other attempt that counted was her third, 6.41, which would have been good for the silver.

"I wish her all the best because she is still young and she has a great future," Balauitan-Gabito said in tribute to the 5-foot Torres. "We embraced and I told her to just keep up the good work and make the Philippines proud."

Torres upheld the country's long winning tradition in the event which the retired Elma Muros-Posadas ruled for a record eight times and the revered Lydia de Vega-Mercado once in 1983.

Elma still holds the old RP record of 6.52 meters.

"Thank you for giving us our first gold," a teary-eyed First Gentleman Mike Arroyo said while hugging both Torres and Balauitan-Gabito in the stands.

Placing third in the long jump was Ngew Sin Mei of Malaysia, who cleared 6.27 meters.

Vietnamese Le Thi Phuong won the silver and Thai Sunisa Kao-Iad the bronze in women's pole vault, where the old record of 3.90 meters was held by Indonesia's Ni Putu Desy Margawaty.

Filipino Deborah Samson also cleared 3.60 meters but Sunisa took the bronze for making it on her first attempt. Mikaela Santos, the other local in the pole vault final and the RP record holder, was good for only 3.20 meters.

Narcisa Atienza bowed out of the high jump early, failing to clear 1.80 even as Thailand bet Noeng-Ruthai Chaipech bagged the bronze.

Two of four Filipinos in the 100 meters failed to advance to the finals, with a tired Balauitan-Gabito earning a lucky loser's ticket like Arnold Villarube.

Ralph Waldy Soguilon and Villarube finished dead last in their heat and Villarube only advanced by gaining the seventh-best time. Mohd Faizal Maslim of Malaysia was the eighth qualifier, his 10.88 still two-hundreths of a second better than Soguilon's 10.90.

Thirteen gold medals are at stake today, including the centerpiece men and women's 100 meters. Eduardo Buenavista of the Philippines is heavily favored to repeat in the 10,000 meters like Danilo Fresnido in the javelin. With a report from Hazel Sanculi

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Nutnum's

cross with an unstoppable header just inside the box after a mad scramble that left the Malaysian defense in shambles.

The Panaad turned pitch black 72 minutes into the game after the stadium's source, Alijis Power Feeder of the Central Negros Electric Cooperative, tripped.

Thailand paid dearly for its complacent defending after the restart as Amir Shahrin Bin Abd Mubin beat the offside trap with a sweeping run and crossed to a streaking Mohd Nor Bin Ismail inside the box for the equalizer in the 81st minute.

The Thais opened the scoring in the 43rd minute when Nutnum followed up Winothai's foiled strike with a sleek tap in from the far post.

Meanwhile, two crucial Group B matches are set at separate venues today with Singapore, Laos and Indonesia needing victories to stay in the hunt for the second semis berth. Vietnam clinched the first semis seat with nine points.

With five points to its credit, Indonesia (1-2-0) is currently second, followed by Singapore (1-1-1) with four and Laos (1-0-2) with three.

for RP lady booters

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As in their game against Indonesia yesterday, Filipino head coach Marlon Maro's wards need to score as many goals as possible in the event that the "goals for-goals against" system is employed to break a tie at the end of the single round robin event.

The Nationals will be in blue uniform and Philippine Football Federation (PFF) president Johnny Romualdez is again requesting football aficionados to come to the stadium in blue attire.

Marikina City Mayor Marides C. Fernando is also calling on Marikina residents to come in blue and cheer for the team.

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at the bronze when Malaysia ousted Vietnam in the second round. Indonesia then beat Malaysia in the final for the gold.

The lowly regarded men's team picked up the cudgels for the karate squad—albeit belatedly.

Finally responding to the cheers of a loud and jampacked crowd, the men's kumite squad, powered by Bernardino Chu, came through with a crushing sweep of Brunei. Too bad the explosive form only came in the bronze medal match. Indonesia and Malaysia, the sport's two traditional powerhouses in the region, again finished gold-silver.

Stephanie Lim and Noel Espinosa added to the bronze tally when they finished third in the men's and women's individual kata later in the night. With reports from Marian Baring, Cebu Daily News

KUNG ANG DOORBELL
MAY TUNOG
BAKIT ANG BARBELL
WALA?

KUNG ITO WALANG
ASUKAL
BAKIT ITO MASARAP?

NEW
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MAXIMUM TASTE. NO SUGAR.

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SPORTSWATCH

King's Bakeshop on top

KING'S BAKESHOP RODE ON THE HEROICS OF Harold Mendoza to nip UCM Auto Aircon-Lyceum, 82-80, in overtime and complete a sweep of the eliminations in the Picaa Open basketball tourney at the Philippine Buddhacare gym in Quezon City. Mendoza hit the game-winning basket with only two seconds left to power King's Bakeshop to its seventh straight win in the eight-team event. King's Bakeshop and Spring Cooking Oil (6-1) are also assured of twice-to-beat advantage over the No. 3 and No. 4 teams. Mediatrix Telecom (4-3) beat Wang's-RTU, 106-100, to clinch No. 4 spot, just behind Mail & More (5-2).

Letranista golf up at Agui

LETRANISTA 77-81, silver jubilarians for the 2006 Letran alumni homecoming, kicks off its year-long preparation for the event with the staging of the 1st Letranista Golf Tournament tomorrow at the Camp Aguinaldo golf course. Tee-off is from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. Manila Rep. Rodolfo Bacani, a ruby jubilarian, Letran Alumni Association (LAA) president Dr. Lionel Javier and LAA chaplain Fr. Boy Sulpico, O.P., will be joined by project director Patrick Ronas in the ceremonial tee-off. The system 36-format tournament is mainly supported by Globe Telecom and St. Mary's Publishing Corp. Tickets are available at the batch's secretariat with telephone no. 309-1049.

'Bakbakan' finals today

THE BLOCKBUSTER 2005 BAKBAKAN 9-STAG Derby, which registered a record 856 entries, enters its championship round starting at 12 noon today with more than 120 fights at the Araneta Coliseum. Eleven cockers from the provinces have remained unbeaten with six wins each. They are Mayor Cito Alberto and Boy Montano of Catanduanes, Jun Yap of Pampanga, Tony Panopio of Batangas, Odie Fausto of Cagayan, Obet Son of Bulacan, Jojie dela Merced of Tarlac, Rainier Kau of Ilocos, Al Garcia and Ricoy Palmares of Iloilo, Joseph Reyes of Bulacan, Cano Daniel of Zamboanga and Antiong Brothers.

"Bakbakan" is an annual event of the National Federation of Gamefowl Breeders (NFGB), in cooperation with main sponsors Gran Matador and B-Meg. NFGB president Ricoy Palmares said the number of entries rose from last year's 656.

RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA
BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Fastbreak 2. Ninety Nine Cents 3. My Little Africa 4. Fourth of December
Race 2—1. Jaja/Witch Craft 2. Princess Indy 3. Gamby's Attcak 4. Astronaut
Race 3—1. Boxster 2. Deity 3. Holy King 4. Western Dancer
Race 4—1. Mina sa Isla 2. Golden Issue 3. Reign of Fire 4. Morning Glory 5. Empire Trish
Race 5—1. Gelay's Charm 2. Hurry Prince 3. Imperator 4. Valentine Girl
Race 6—1. La Bella Rossa 2. Lord of All 3. Gigi Rodriguez 4. Mojito
Race 7—1. Cal's Jewel 2. Ahoy My Boy 3. One Vision 4. Western Legend
Race 8—1. Kool Heart 2. Tiramisu 3. Mulligan 4. Refuse to Bend
Race 9—1. Constant Queen 2. Stradivarius 3. Streisand 4. Valentine Dancer 5. Strong Jays
Race 10—1. Look of Love 2. Solo Singer 3. Divine Right 4. Can and Will
Race 11—1. Morning Nell 2. En Carta 3. Fancy Rose/Wing Away 4. Eden's Quest
Race 12—1. La Signorina 2. Sound Value 3. Lucky Joe 4. Musikero
Race 13—1. Tactical Move 2. Gigi's Gold 3. My Lady Hannah 4. Queen's Gold 5. My Rabbonnie 6. Il Amorosa

Stallions pace Fil-Am golf

BAGUIO CITY—THE STALLIONS ADDED 67 POINTS AT THE CAMP JOHN Hay Golf Club yesterday to its 69 at the Baguio Country Club in the first round to wrest the Flight E lead in the regular Am division of the 56th Fil-Am Invitational.

Paced by Paul Laus 18 points under the Stableford scoring system, the Stallions totaled 136, five points clear of the Balikbayan team and 14 up on Team Las Vegas.

The Stallions take a rest day today and will resume their bid at the par-61, 4,038-yard BCC course tomorrow.

The balikbayans carded a 60 yesterday for a 131 aggregate, nine clear of the third running Team Las Vegas which scored a 67 yesterday.

Square & Compass returned to the BCC layout with a 73—a far cry from its opening-day 82—but still kept the Flight F lead in the Fil Division with 155.

PAGA Guam posted a 76 to trail Square and Compass by 11 with a two-day total of 144. Seoul Survivors had a 69-137 for third place, followed by Fil-Am Chicago 66-134 and Sustagen Premium II 58-128.

Laus played the par 69, 5,006-yard John Hay layout on a gross 90 for 18 points. Pampanga Gov. Mark Lapid and younger brother Maynard contributed 17 each.

Elvin Dinio completed the scoring with 15 points for the Stallions, which discarded the 14 of Jack Mendez under the five-to-play, four-to-count format.

In the Stableford system, a bogey is worth one point, a par two, a birdie three, and so on.

Manny Alvarez led PAGA Guam's scorers with 28 points in the tournament with Smart Communications, Wilson Sports, Eva Air and Club Car as major sponsors. He was backed by the 16 each of Agsalud, Jun Distor and Rey Rivera. Roger Gattoc failed to count with 12.

Other sponsors of the event are Citibank, San Miguel Corp., Travel Club, IPI, Ottica Eyewear, Ayala Land, Orchard Le Tigre, Raymundo's Trophies and Sculptures and Swing Magazine.

INTERVILLAGE CHAMPS: Members of the Don Enrique Heights golf squad, led by team captain Jose Santos Jr., with Nokia marketing manager Gerard Peñaflor (standing, extreme right) and Videocom head Vince Villafuerte (standing, eighth from left) after ruling the 2005 Nokia Intervillage golf tournament in Canlubang recently. They are Romeo Ignacio, Wilmer Embuscado, Rep. Alejandro Urro, Lito Garcia, Casiano Alejo, Billy Sta. Maria, Cris Gabriel, Bobby Gabriel, Eddie Silverio, Narciso Ragua, Celestino Lee and Renato Mabugat.

SEAG moves on sans basketball

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

DESPITE LIMITED RESOURCES AND the absence of basketball, organizers of this year's 23rd Southeast Asian Games, from Philsoc head Jose "Peping" Cojuangco to PSC chair William "Butch" Ramirez, including chief sports patron First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and Malacañang, never seriously considered canceling the staging of the biennial meet here.

"The Games must go on," said Cojuangco, who is also president of the Philippine Olympic Committee. "We won't stop," he was quoted as saying in a determined voice that those closely working with him such as POC chair Robert Aventajado, secretary general Steve Hontiveros and special assistant Go Teng Kok, fully understand his obvious course—to turn the pre-Games problems into a successful performance.

Yesterday, the 23rd SEA Games formally opened before a mammoth Sunday crowd at the Luneta, with President Macapagal-Arroyo as guest of honor.

Like every host country since 1959, the Philippines showcased during the opening ceremonies the character, culture, pride, music, creativity and skills of her athletes. Filipino sports officials are targeting from 100 to 120 gold medals to win the overall championship, with the bulk coming from boxing, wushu, taekwondo, athletics, billiards, swimming, bowling, chess, equestrian and other martial arts events.

Jose Mari Chan, one of the country's leading composers and singers, and Rene Nieva, lyricist of the "Biyahe Tayo! Song" used in the tourism department's Wow Philippines campaign, combined their talents to come up with the theme song for the 23rd SEA Games. Nine-year-old singing sensation Julia Abueva, grand daughter of National Artist Napoleon Abueva, sang the theme song backed by the San Miguel Philharmonic orchestra conducted by Ryan Cayabyab and the San Miguel Master Choral.

On the suspension of the Philippines by the international basketball federation (Fiba) from all Fiba-sanctioned tournaments, including this year's SEA Games, I agree with a recent report of the Senate committee on games, amusement and sports chaired by Sen. Lito Lapid that it is the main concern of the committee to "ascertain that a Philippine basketball team, which officially carries the national color, shall be well-prepared at all times in all international competitions to provide honors to our people and country."

The Philippines has made a big impact on the international scene in the past. It finished fifth in the 1936 Berlin Olympics, bagged third place in the 1954 World Basketball Championship in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and won many Asian Games, ABC and Jones Cup titles. However, the recent performance of the once proud and mighty Philippine teams has declined sharply. In the 2003 Fiba-Asia men's tournament, the Philippines finished 15th out of 16 teams. We wound up second to last in the Jones Cup in Taipei and finished winless in the 2004 Stankovic Cup, losing by an average of 30 points. To make matters worse, the national team even lost to a rag-tag selection of actors and little-known cagers.

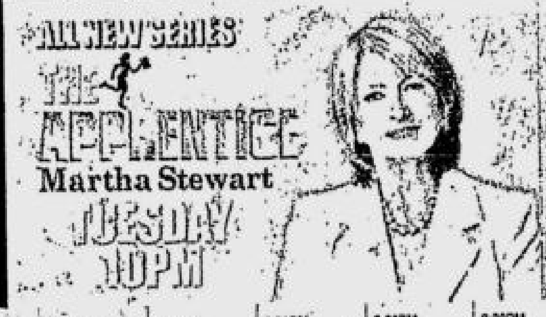
Predictably, there was a nationwide outrage over the way things were being run by the Basketball Association of the Philippines, notably by BAP secretary general Graham Lim and national coach Boyzie Zamar. In response to a clamor for change, the POC entered the picture by inviting the country's basketball stakeholders to form an ad hoc committee that will address the problem of forming a strong, well-trained and competitive national team. BAP officials agreed with this approach and even passed a resolution expressing their full cooperation to the POC. But the BAP, which is now headed by former Sen. Joey Lina, reneged on these agreements, which led to its suspension and eventual expulsion from the Olympic body last June by an overwhelming 33 to 1 vote by the members of the POC general assembly.

The Senate committee is now batting for structural reforms for us to regain our membership in the Fiba.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER TV GUIDE

Monday, November 28, 2005

ALL NEW SEASON
THE APPRENTICE
MONDAY 10PM
SEE IT FIRST ON ABC

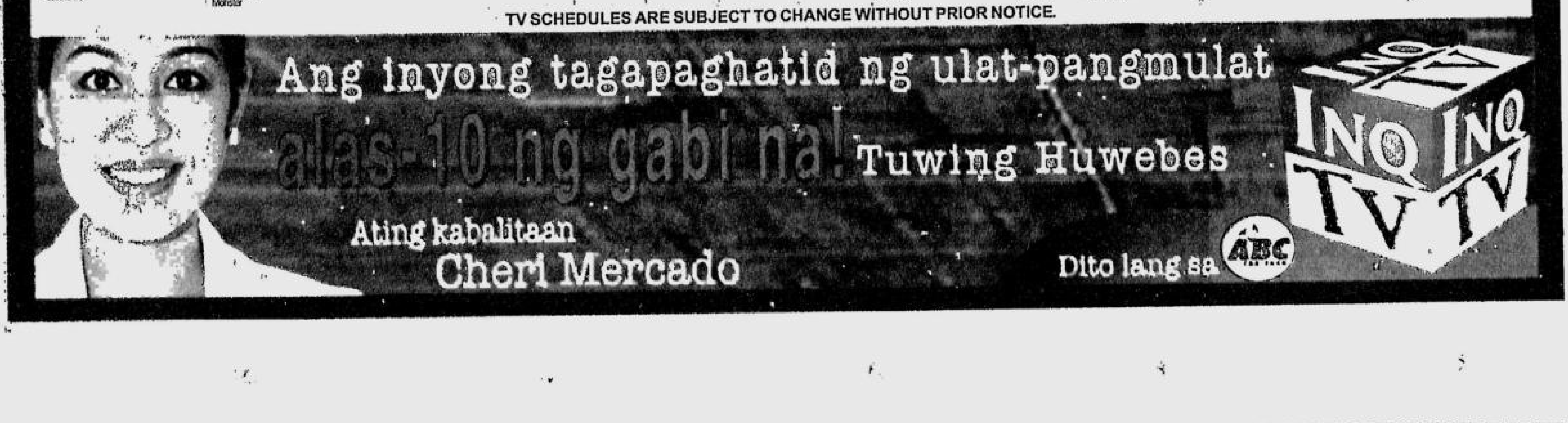


ALL NEW SERIES
THE APPRENTICE
Martha Stewart
TUESDAY 10PM

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5			Winner TV Shopping		Speed		TNA Impact		Sentro	Friends	Guinness Book Of Record		Fear Factor		Big News	The Apprentice		Totoo TV	
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Little Amy	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Amazing Twins	Meteor Garden Season 2	TV Patrol World	Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Kampanerang Kuba	Panday	Vietnam Rose	Pinoy Big Brother	OK Fine Whatever			Insider
AXN		SWAT Police			Worst Case Scenario		E Buzz	Amazon		The Outer Limits (Season IV)		Sports Disaster		Numb3rs (Season 1)		Lost		Lost	
Cartoon Network	Yogi Bear Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	What's New Scooby Doo?	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	Pet Alien	Atomic Betty	Battle B-Daman	Machine Robo-Rescue	The Looney Tunes Show		Johnny Bravo	Courage The Cowardly Dog	Mike, Lu & Og	Time Squad	Pet Alien	Atomic Betty
Cinema One		Pinoy American Style				Minsan Minahal Kita				Feng Shui				Mano Po 3: My Love				Bahid	
Cinemax			The Trouble With Harry (3:45PM)				Edge Of Madness			Manhattan Murder Mystery (7:15 PM)				The Naked Gun From The Files Of Police Squad!			Shot Through The Heart (10:25PM)		
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	Living Golf	World News Asia		Your World Today	
Discovery Channel		Body Work		Ancient Clues		The Mythbusters 3		Hyperspace With Sam Neil		Unsolved History				Wild Discovery		Blueprint For Disaster		Altered Statesmen	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Lilo & Stitch	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			So Little Time		Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN												Sportscenter Asia							
ETC		Complete Savages	Knock First	Today Weekend		Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Friends	Will & Grace	The O.C.		Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		ET Weekend		For Love Or Money	
EWTN	Benediction And Devotion Encore	Angelus (3:15PM)	Bible Treasure Chest	Image Of God	St. Thomas More Faithful Statesman	Rosary With Mother Angelica	Voices On Virtue	EWTN Gallery	The Catholic Faith & Vatican II	Sunday Night With (Encore) Fr. Benedict Groeschel		Threshold Of Hope		Daily Mass (SAP) Live		Angelus (10:15PM)	Defending Life	Catholic Compass	
Fox News		Fox Report Sunday		Beltway Boys	Fox News Watch	Bulls & Bears	Cavuto On Business	Forbes On Fox	Cashin' In	Fox & Friends				Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Kung Mamahalin Mo Lang Ako	Now and Forever	Romance	Dragonball Z	Slam Dunk		Frog Prince	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Darna	Encantadia	Sugo	Jewel In The Palace	Lagot Ka, Isusumbong Kita			Saksi
Hallmark Channel	Bewitched	Wife Swap		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Who's The Boss	Bewitched	The Nanny	Family Law II		Wife Swap		Icon			Icon (10:35PM)		Family Law II (11:25PM)
HBO	Private Benjamin			Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade (4:15 PM)					Fair Game			The Chronicles Of Riddick				Rome Ep 02: How Titus Pullo Brought Down The Republic		Raising Cain	
IBC 13		EZ Shop		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Krusada Kontra Krimen		Global Family Series		ME TV		SeaGames Special		King Of Adventure	IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV		South Park	Street Smarts	WWE Heat		WWE Velocity		Cheat	Just For Laughs (Gags)	Mad TV		Sweet Spot	Comedy Central Presents	Comedy Central Presents	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Blue Collar TV	Banzai	Joe Schmo Show	
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Molto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Food 911	E! Extra My Crazy Life		NY Fashion Week	Life & Style		Living Space	Style Star	Breathing Room	Genuine Article
MTV Philippines	Rockola	MTV Ask	Chart Attack		Viva La Bam	Pop Inc		MTV Hits				Massive	Get Spotted	TRL		The 70's House	Wild N' Out	Homecoming	VH1 Video Collections
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	OPM MYX		Star MYX	MYXILOG	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten				Urban MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX
National Geographic		Spider Deadly Love		Planet Wild		Snake Wranglers	Totally Wild	Top 5		Wow!		About Asia		Nat'l Geographic Specials		Dangerous Encounters		Bug Attack S2	
NBN		Value Vision		New Life TV Shopping		Teledyaryo	Diyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Sila?	Tinig ng Bayan (Live)				Teledyaryo				Dial M		Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues/ What Planet Are You From	Rugrats	Hey Arnold!	My Life As A Teenage Robot/ Right On Top	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	SpongeBob SquarePants	Fairly Odd Parents	All That	Naturally Sadie	Romeo	Drake & Josh	The Fairly Odd Parents	All Grown Up	As Told By Ginger	Rocket Power	Chalkzone	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	The Brothers Garcia
PBO			Hinukay Ko Na Ang Libingan Mo				Lab Kita Feel Mo Ba				Ober Da Bakod 2				Radyo				Ang Gusto Ko Sa Lalaki
RPN 9	TV Shopping		Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	Wild Thornberrys	Sponge Bob	Global Battle Of The Bands	Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	Scare Tactics	NBA On RPN					Newswatch Now	Simple Life 2	Cargo For Truth	
SBN 21		New Life TV Shop						Winner TV Shopping				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Music Video		Friends Again	
Solar Sports						Swatch FIVB World Tour '05 Men's and Women's Final				Sagupaan		Sports Desk		NBA Game Nets @ Lakers					NBA Jam
Sports Plus			Golf Hawaii 2004	Ultimate Fighting Championship Special						FMX						Franklin Templeton Shootout Final			
Star Movies	Cave In			Aces: Iron Eagle 3 (4:05 PM)			Bulworth (5:45 PM)				The Haunted Mansion			Alien				Aliens (10:55PM)	
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Whose Line Is It Anyway?	Angel		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Friends	Married To The Kellys/ Monk	Everybody Loves Raymond	King Of Queens	Becker/Miss World Asia Pacific Vote For Me /Miss World Caribbean Vote For Me	Monk		Friends	Married To The Kellys/ Monk
Studio 23		Yugioh Duel Monster						Get Backers	Pinoy Big Brother	Wazzup Wazzup	The Swan Season 2		Tru Calling (8:20 PM)	Charmed (9:10 PM)		News Central	The West Wing		Travel Time

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.



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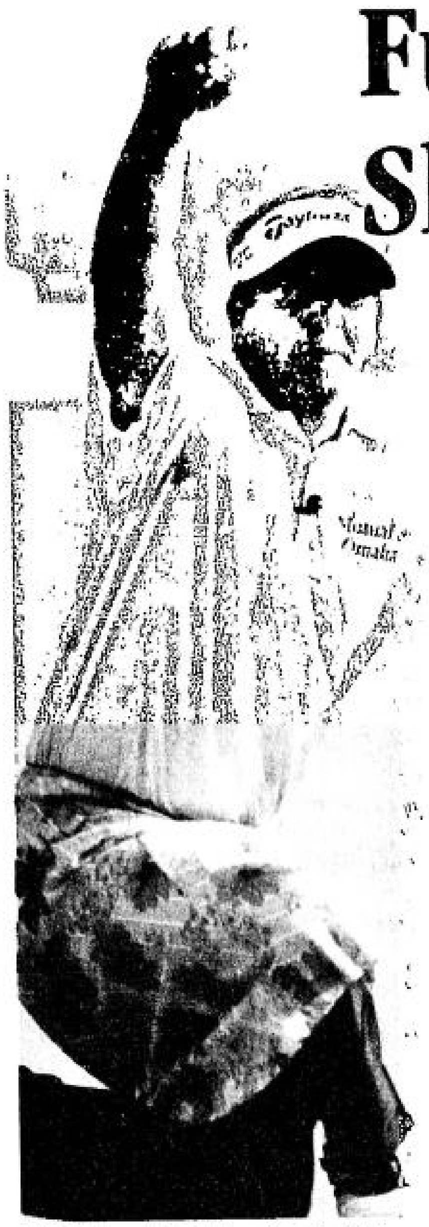
Ating kabalitaan
Cheri Mercado
Dito lang sa ABC
INQ TV

Funk biggest Skins winner



FUNK, wearing a floral pink shirt given to him by Sorenstam who outdrove him, prepares to replace his ball while kneeling awkwardly. AP

LA QUINTA, CALIFORNIA—FRED FUNK DRAINED A long eagle putt on the ninth hole to emerge the big winner Saturday on the first day of the Skins Game at Trilogy Golf Club.

Funk, Tiger Woods, Fred Couples and Annika Sorenstam are playing this weekend in the two-day, 18-hole event in the California desert.

Making his Skins Game debut, Funk was outdriven by Sorenstam and wore a pink skirt while playing the third hole.

But he had the last laugh as he made a $225,000-putt at the last hole of the day.

On the par-5 ninth, Funk fired a 3-iron from 220 yards to 28 feet on the fringe on the left side of the green. Couples just missed an 18-foot putt for eagle and Funk drained his putt for six skins and $225,000.

"Making that putt on the last hole, I just didn't want to get shut out," Funk said. "I didn't dream of winning something that big. That was a lot of fun." Woods was the only other player to break through Saturday, dropping a three-foot putt for birdie on the third hole for three skins and $75,000. Woods lagged a putt from 50 feet to set up his birdie putt while Couples missed off the left edge of the cup from six feet and Sorenstam came up empty on a seven-footer.

"It was a good day. We had some good golf out there. I had a bunch of fun," Woods said. "I kind of got Annika on the second hole. Then, I made a skin and, obviously, Freddy made that bomb on the last hole. So it was exciting for everybody." Couples, the big winner for the fifth time last November, earning $640,000, and Sorenstam, who fired three birdies, each came away empty handed Saturday.

"I had a lot of fun. It was some great golf and Annika hit a couple unbelievable irons for tap-ins," Couples said.

AFP

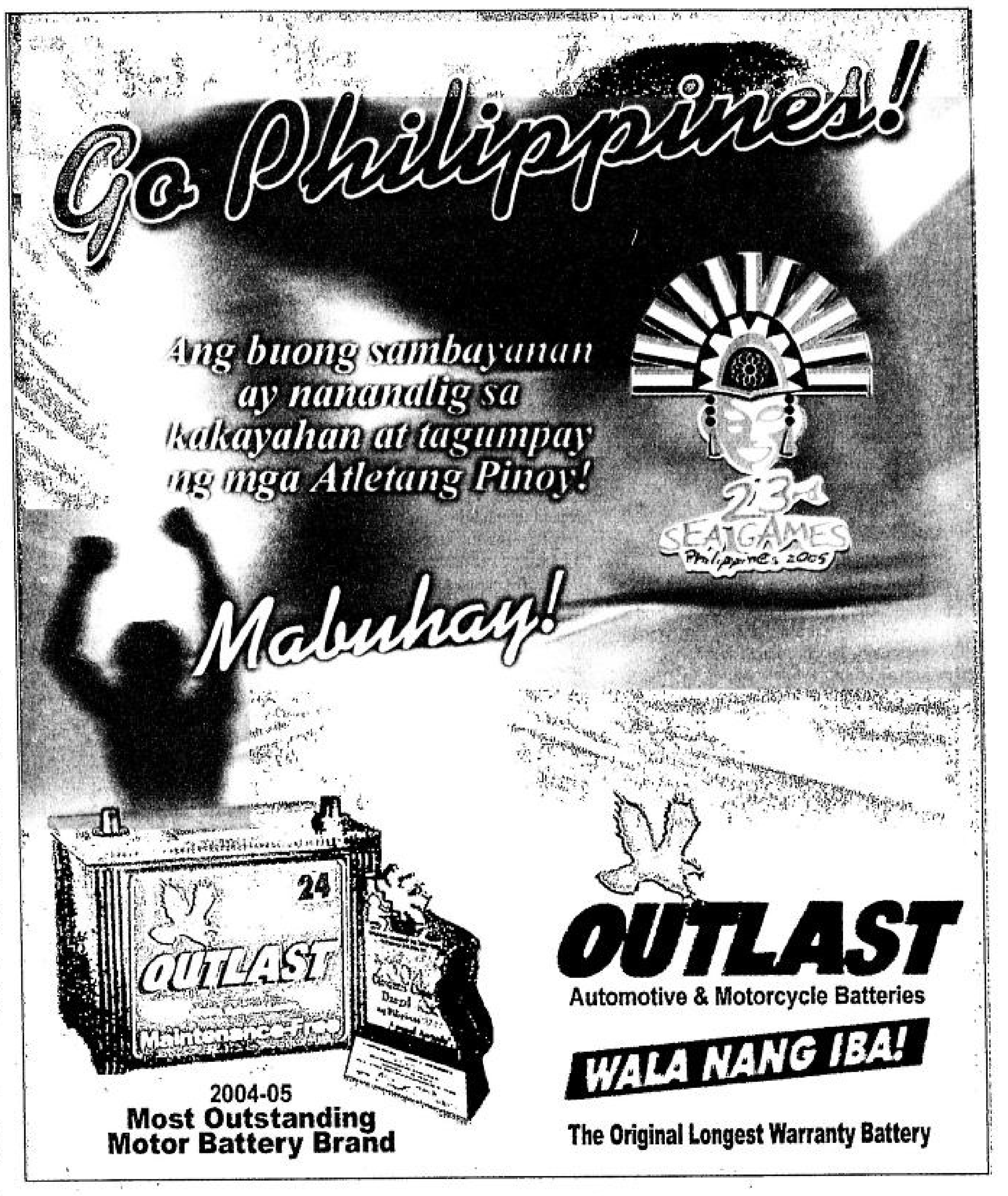
Taniguchi tops Casio World Open

KOCHI, JAPAN—TORU TANIGUCHI FIRED a 3-under-par 69 on Sunday to win his first title of the year with a two-stroke victory over Kim Jong Duck of South Korea in the Casio World Open.

Taniguchi made five birdies, including one on the final hole, against two bogeys as he finished the tournament at 11-under 277 at the Kochi Kuroshio Country Club.

For Taniguchi, last year's Japan Open champion, it was his first title since the 2004 Bridgestone Open.

AP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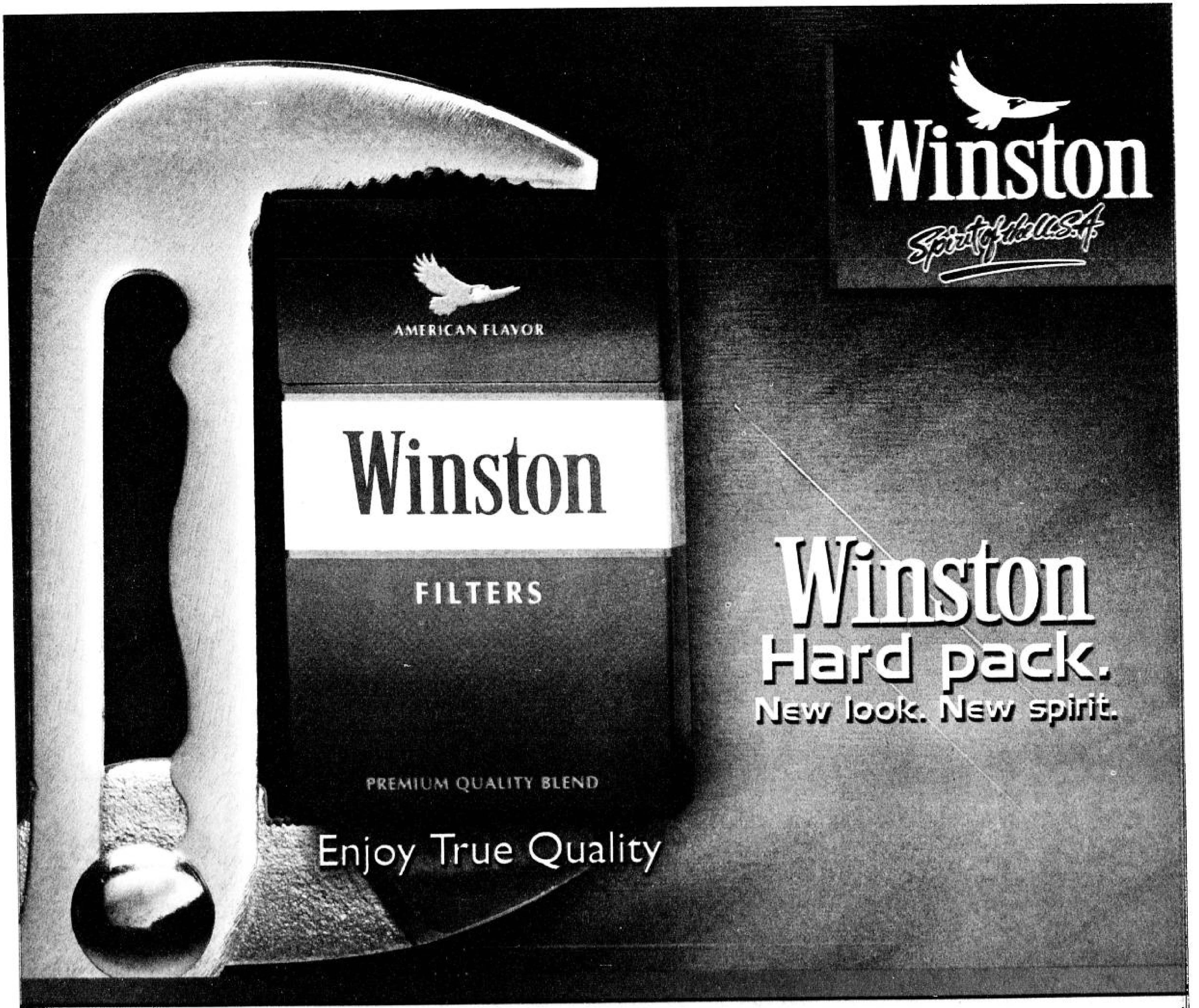
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Buzzer-beater powers Knicks

NEW YORK—NATE ROBINSON HIT A three-pointer at the buzzer, leading the New York Knicks to a 105-102 overtime win over the Philadelphia 76ers in National Basketball Association play at Madison Square Garden on Sunday.

New York overcame a 16-point third quarter deficit and then squandered a nine-point lead in the fourth quarter before finally sealing the win on Robinson's dramatic 23-foot jumper as time expired in the overtime.

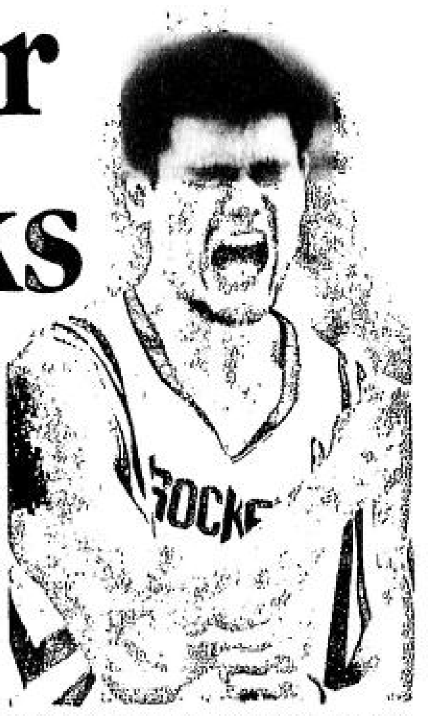
The Sixers trailed by six points in the extra session but rallied to tie the game on a three-pointer by Allen Iverson with 6.2 seconds left. The Knicks then pushed the ball up the court before Robinson drained his game-winning shot.

Stephon Marbury scored a season-high 33 points for the Knicks, who improved to 4-8 with the win.

Solar Sports will telecast the Los Angeles Lakers-New Jersey Nets tussle live from the Staples Center starting 10:30 a.m.

Complete results

NY Knicks 105, Philadelphia 102; (OT) N.O/ Oklahoma City 105, Seattle 99; Orlando 80, Miami 77; Minnesota 89, Cleveland 85; Charlotte 100, Washington 82; Chicago 94, Houston 89; Memphis 112, Dallas 92; Detroit 85, Milwaukee 76; Golden State 117, Toronto 91.


YAO MING reacts after being fouled while making a basket against the Bulls Saturday. AP PHOTO

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Hatton unifies boxing crowns

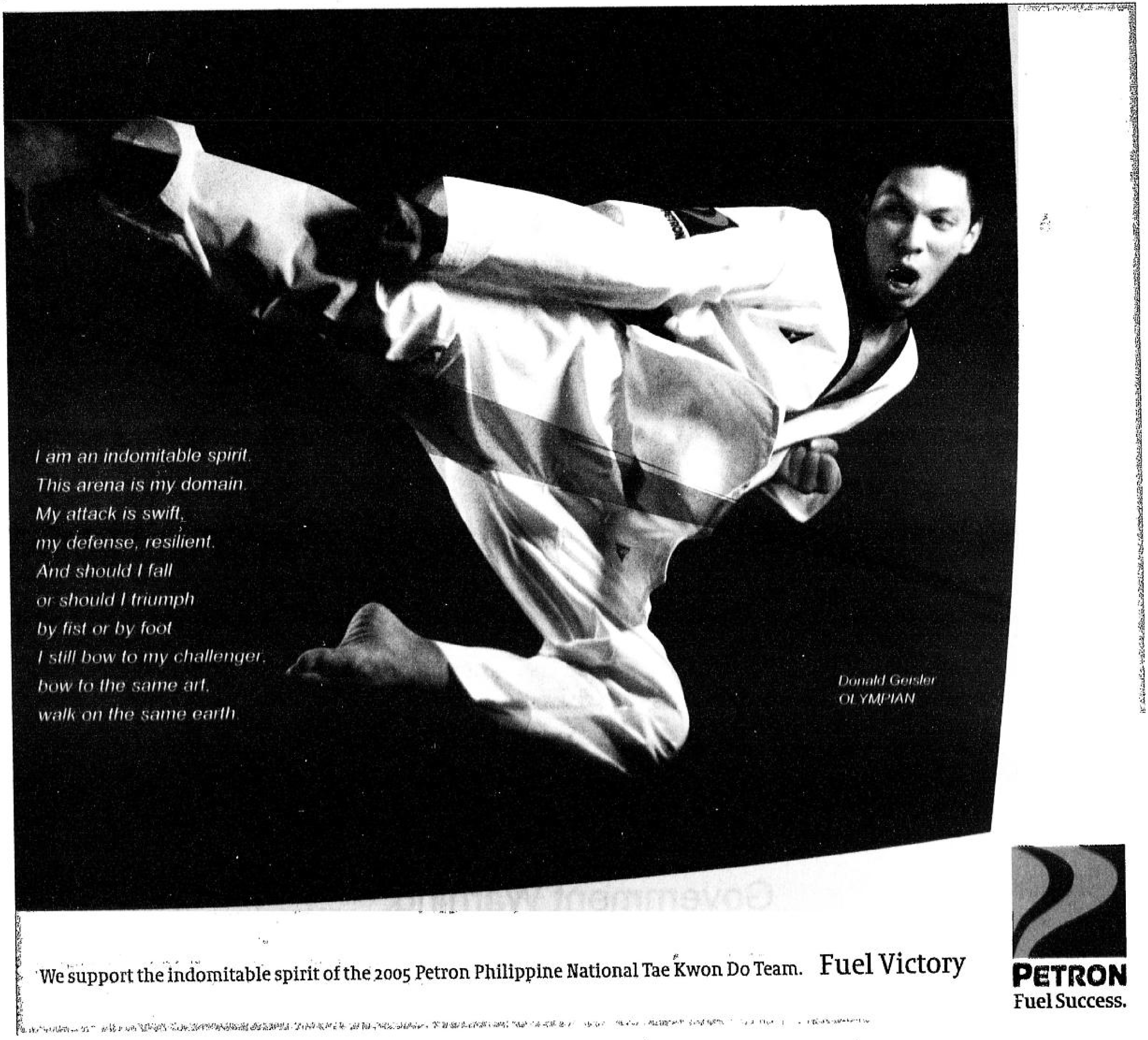
SHEFFIELD—ENGLISHMAN RICKY HATTON knocked out Colombian Carlos Maussa in the ninth round to unify the IBF and WBA world light welterweight titles on Saturday.

Hatton beat Kostya Tszyu to capture the IBF title in June and his hopes of adding Maussa's WBA crown suffered a blow when a clash of heads left him with a cut above his left eye in the opening round.

The Briton continued to press forward but was then cut above his right eye in the third.

Despite the early setbacks, Hatton was always in control of the bout and when Maussa began to tire in the fifth round, the Colombian was forced to cling on over the following few rounds as his opponent applied strong pressure.

Hatton (40-0) stepped up the pace in the ninth, bombarding Maussa with a flurry of punches before knocking him to the canvas with a crushing left hook. *Reuters*


I am an indomitable spirit.
This arena is my domain.
My attack is swift,
my defense, resilient.
And should I fall
or should I triumph
by fist or by foot
I still bow to my challenger,
bow to the same art,
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Robbie Williams is Guinness World Records holder

LONDON—BRITISH POP star Robbie Williams has entered the famed Guinness Book of World Records by selling more than 1.6 million tickets for his 2006 world tour in just one day, its editor said Thursday.

The heartthrob singer takes the five-year-old record from US star Justin Timberlake's former group, NSync.

In 2000, the boy band sold one million tickets in one day for their "No Strings Attached" US tour, worth $40 million.

Tickets to Williams' tour valued at 80 million pounds ($ 137,848,000) sold out in hours on Nov. 19.

The new global benchmark will appear in the 2007 edition of the Guinness book, editor Craig Glenday said, calling it "a proud day for British pop music." *AFP*

The country's biggest acts perform at the Fort on Thursday

MiG for a cause

MANILA IS SET TO welcome back MiG Ayesa, who is scheduled to arrive tomorrow to topbill MTV's "Staying Alive Music Summit for HIV/AIDS 2005" on Thursday, Dec. 1.

The Fil-Aussie rocker who finished an impressive third in the global reality competition "Rock Star: INXS" was in town recently to open the Ad Congress in Cebu. Thrilled fans followed his every move during the week-long visit, his first homecoming in five years.

The music summit, a celebration of World AIDS Day, will be held at the Fort Open Field, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Metro Manila.

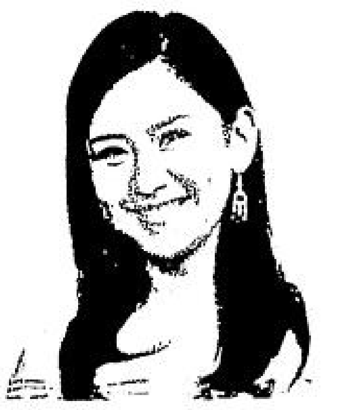
Most awaited

Over 30 performers and celebrity guests have confirmed their participation. They are led by: Bamboo, Barbie Almalbis, Christian Bautista, Cueshe, Giniling Festival, Greyhoundz, Hale, Imago, Itchyworms, Kitchie Nadal, Kamikazee, Kjwan, Mojofly, Moonstar 88, MYMP, Paramita, Parokya ni Edgar, Pupil, Radioactive Sago Project, Rivermaya, Sugarfree, Sarah Geronimo, Sandwich, Session Road, Stonefree, Up Dharma Down, Urbandub, Viva Hot Babes, Yasmien Kurdi, and 6cyclemind.

Now on its third year, the MTV summit is among the most eagerly awaited music events in the country. In 2003, there were 23 performers, plus international pop star Mandy Moore as special guest. Last year hip-hop acts joined rock groups, and foreign performers were Duncan Sheik, The Barbs, Jay Sean, and Joshua Payne.

Empowerment

MTV's Staying Alive campaign aims to empower the youth to protect themselves against HIV/AIDS, fight stigma and discrimination, and engage businesses, media and organizations in forming a response to the worldwide problem.


SARAH Geronimo is on the list.

The activities on Thursday start at 1 p.m. Booths will be set up at the grounds from which interested spectators can learn more about HIV and AIDS. There will be pre-show games at 4:30 p.m. and the main show starts at 7 p.m.

For ticket and other inquiries, call the Unicef hotline, 758-1000. Tune in to Magic 89.9, 99.5 RT, Jam 88.3, KLite 1035, and NU 107 to catch ticket promos.

Log on to www.mtvasia.com to join the MiG Ayesa Meet and Greet contest, which ends tomorrow.

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2005 PHILIPPINE BUSINESS ACHIEVERS AWARDS
"Most Outstanding Facial Care Salon"

2005 PHILIPPINE BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS
"No.1 Facial Center"

2005 FAMILY PRODUCT EXCELLENCE AWARDS
"Outstanding Facial Salon"

PHILIPPINE MARKETING EXCELLENCE AWARDS
"Most Outstanding Facial Center"
Makati City Awards

12th ANNUAL ASIA-PACIFIC EXCELLENCE AWARDS
"Outstanding Facial Salon"

2005 NATIONAL SHOPPER'S CHOICE ANNUAL AWARDS
"No.1 One Stop Facial Salon"
Metro Manila

2005 NATIONAL PRODUCT QUALITY EXCELLENCE AWARDS
"Best Facial Salon"

2005 NATIONAL CONSUMERS QUALITY AWARDS
"Top Facial Salon"

2005 BRAND CHAMPIONS AWARDS
"Top Facial Care Center"

2005 PEOPLE'S BRAND AWARDS
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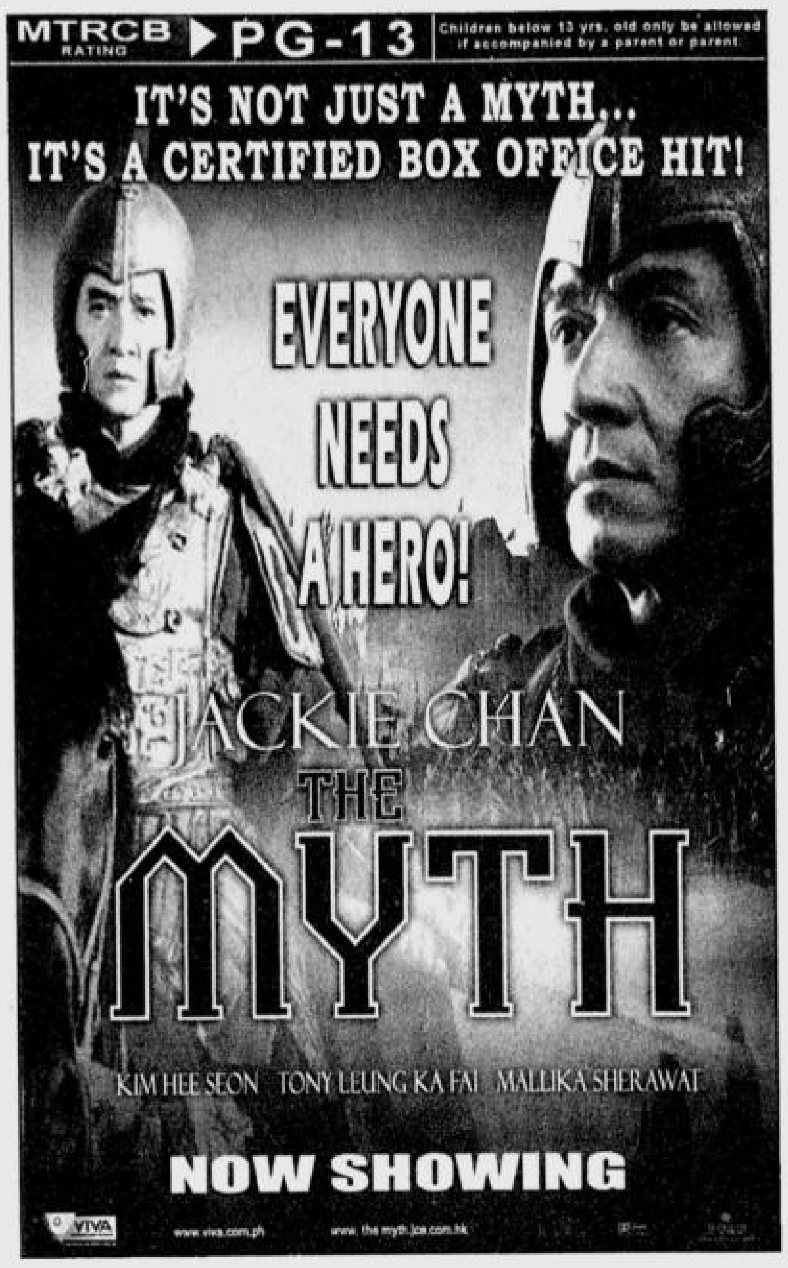
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Fil-Am singer to co-host GBOB finals in London

APRIL VILLANUEVA

FIL-AM SINGER APRIL VILLANUEVA IS SET to leave for London to co-host the international finals of the Global Battle of the Bands (GBOB) on Dec. 7. The program will be telecast in 26 countries.

April was very surprised about landing the job. The only shows she has done since arriving in the Philippines in February are "SOP" on Sundays and the local run of GBOB, which was concluded recently.

When Wilfred Casumbal, GBOB Philippines coordinator, found out that the London show was scouting for a co-host (opposite a British emcee), he submitted April's portfolio to the program's head office in the UK. A week before the local finals, April was informed that she had clinched the big gig. She immediately called her family in Seattle to break the news.

"They couldn't believe it!" April recalls, laughing.

The Philippines will be represented in London by Juan Miguel Salvador and his band, The Authority. The group had won over hundreds of other contending rock bands from across the country.

Even when April was offered the local run, she had wondered if she was the right person for .the job. "I'm not really into rock music," she says. "Plus I was scared."

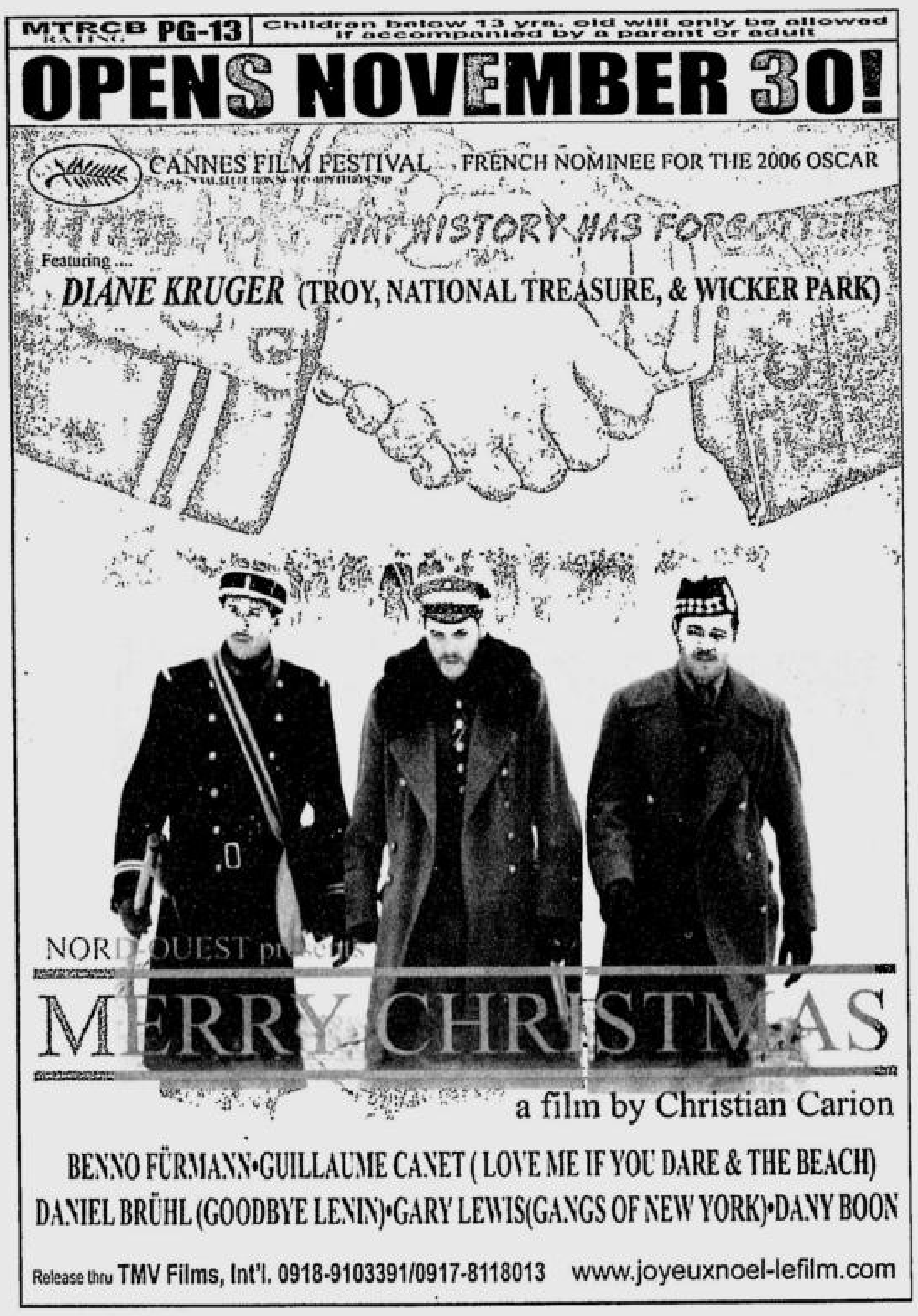
The 19-year-old R&B artist started singing at age 6 for the Filipino community in Seattle.

She feels that her coming to the Philippines was the best decision she has made for her chosen career. "I am very blessed," she says. "It's all going very fast, but I have some really good people supporting me."

Of course she misses her family in Seattle, she says. "But I know in my heart that this is where I should be right now."

After London, April is scheduled to promote her very own album. "I don't know what to expect, I'm just keeping my fingers crossed," she says.

And as for the competition, which is plenty, April believes there's always room for one more. "This is a very big industry, and I'm just glad for the opportunity to show everyone who I am."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6 GOLD (SDDS) EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
7 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
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2 SEX EDUCATION
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2 SYOTA NG BAYAN
3 (DTS) THE MYTH
4 THE DESCENT
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FEEDBACK

Hats off to Nuqui and Reyes

From David Mendoza of 12530 Dormouse Rd., San Diego, Ca. (via e-mail)

IT COMES AS NO surprise that Regal Films is throwing its weight around again come film festival time. Its good to know that people like Joey Reyes and Manny Nuqui have the courage to point out irregularities in the forthcoming Metro Manila Film Festival. I remember the earlier MMFFs, when I was still in high school in the Philippines. My mom and I would watch two or three films a day since we still had to travel to Manila from the province. That was when the credibility of the MMFF was at its peak, with movies such as "Ina Ka ng Anak Mo" and "Bahay-Bahayan, Kasal-Kasalan." But it seems Lily Monteverde has become so powerful, that she has converted the festival to a nearly all-Regal exhibition. I hope festival organizers will do something before it's too late. Or Cinemalaya will bring the MMFF to its knees in two or three years. Hats off again to Nuqui and Reyes. May your tribe increase!

Thanks for Celia Flor story

From Edwina Litton Ortigas and Edward Litton Jr. (via e-mail)

WE ENJOYED Bayani San Diego's article on Celia Flor. She was our next door neighbor in Wack Wack when we were growing up in the late '50s-early '60s. I can vividly recall her lovely home which we used to frequent since her children, Itos and Marie, were our friends. It was also at her house that we met the Hollywood actor Robert Cummings, who co-starred with Grace Kelly in the Alfred Hitchcock film Dial M For Murder. It's nice to see that she is as lovely as we remember her to be.

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GLOBE PLATINUM P249 / P299
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12:40 / 1:20 / 2:20 / 3:40 / 4:20
5:20 / 6:40 / 7:20 / 8:20 / 9:40
PRIME
1:05 / 3:50 / 6:35 / 9:20
THE MYTH
1:15 / 4:00 / 6:45 / 9:30
EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
1:30 / 4:10 / 6:50 / 9:30

GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
3:00 / 6:00 / 9:00
CHICKEN LITTLE
12:30 / 2:30 / 4:30 / 6:30 / 8:30
APRIL SNOW
2:00 / 4:20 / 6:40 / 9:00
FLIGHT PLAN
2:00 / 4:30 / 7:00 / 9:30

ALI MALL CINEMAS
❶ HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET
12:00 / 2:50 / 5:40 / 8:30
❷ THE MYTH
12:20 / 3:05 / 5:50 / 8:35
❸ EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
12:10 / 2:50 / 5:30 / 8:10
❹ CHICKEN LITTLE
11:30 / 1:30 / 3:30 / 5:30 / 7:30
❺ PRIME
12:25 / 3:10 / 5:55 / 8:40
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Sleights of cinema in 'Goblet of Fire'

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

MIKE NEWELL TELLS A RIP-ROARING story in "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire," coming up with one dazzling sleight of cinema after another, even as he pushed the film franchise's young leads inexorably into the murky, dorky world of teenage angst.

Newell manages this difficult juggling act well, but stumbles in the film's final fourth section, which fails to peak because of what could be an anti-climactic sequencing of the harrowing tests that Harry and the three other young contenders in the episode's "Triwizard" tournament are compelled to undergo.

The final challenge, looking for a magical lamp in a maze of trees and bushes that turn out to have a malevolent life of their own, isn't as striking or risky as the two previous tests—battling a fire-snorting dragon for possession of a golden egg, and swimming underwater for a full hour to rescue four young friends placed under the spell of some vicious sea creatures.

In any case, the movie eventually regains the high ground when, after surviving the challenge of the malevolent maze, Harry confronts his main nemesis Voldemort's reconstituted form, and engages in a duel to the death with him, wand-to-wand.

Other memorable moments in "Goblet of Fire" include: Harry's first "nude" scene (well, only sort of). He immerses himself in a huge pool to "read" the bubbles in the golden egg that will clue him in on the nature of his second challenge—and a flirty female ghost tries to take a peek at—well, it's all in good fun, so **Daniel Radcliffe**'s fans don't need to fret that their young fave is gearing up for a career in sexy flicks.

The "reconstitution" of Voldemort is also pulled off in a particularly striking way, in a sequence set in a graveyard that's darkly and dankly reminiscent of the witches scene in "Macbeth."

Ralph Fiennes takes full advantage of that grandly theatrical setting, and goes to town with his character's transformation from giant snake to eerily scary epitome of evil—with snake-slits for nostrils.

Only through judicious bias in allocation of close-ups does Newell prevent Harry's character from being thoroughly upstaged by Voldemort's serpentine projection.

Then, "Goblet of Fire" expands the film series' context by introducing a number of new teenage characters, student wizards all, from other schools of magic in different parts of the world.

Not only does this add to the movie's appeal to teen viewers, but it also underscores the worthy theme of international cooperation and global unity.

DANIEL Radcliffe in "Goblet of Fire"

Adults could learn a thing or two from this welcome reminder, so we wouldn't need wizards to set right a real world that's gone so terribly wrong.

Taking all of these plus and minus points into consideration, we conclude with the view that, for all of its magical and thematic marvels, "Goblet of Fire" falls short of excellence because it doesn't sufficiently tie up its three daunting challenges to its escalating story of good ultimately winning over evil.

'Merry Christmas'

FRANCE'S official entry to the Oscars, "Merry Christmas" makes its Asian premiere in the Philippines on Nov. 30, months ahead of its February 2006 opening in the States.

Directed by **Christian Carion** and starring **Diane Krugeer**, the film is based on a true story about a Christmas truce in World War I that brought German, French and British soldiers out of their trenches.

AXN's yearend bash

TO ROUND out a great year of television, AXN goes on two weekend marathons showcasing the best episodes of the channel's biggest programs, as voted by viewers themselves.

"Kung Fu Hustle" makes its TV premiere on AXN at 9 p.m. on Dec. 15, and the "Best of the Biggest" weekend marathons will be aired on Dec. 18 and 25.

From now until Dec. 11, viewers can vote on their favorite episodes via www.axn-asia.com.

'Madagascar' on DVD/VCD

THE HIT animated feature, "Madagascar," is now on Magnavision video. The fun film romp is about four spoiled zoo animals (Alex the lion, Gloria the Hippo, Marty the Zebra and Melman the Giraffe), who end up in the jungle and find out what life is really like.

The Cure's 'Just Like Heaven" is the perfect song for this perky romantic comedy

Appropriately otherworldly

REVIEW

NEW YORK—WITH '80S BANDS FROM Duran Duran to Depeche Mode enjoying a revival, it was only a matter of time before a movie came along that was named after a song by The Cure.

("Boys Don't Cry" doesn't count—the song is too upbeat and the movie is too depressing.)

"Just Like Heaven" is the perfect song to go along with a perky romantic comedy. Other Cure tunes—"Killing an Arab," for example— wouldn't have been so suitable.

Reese Witherspoon, sunny and bright and appropriately otherworldly in her blond radiance, haunts the man who rents her apartment after she's involved in a serious car accident.

Mark Ruffalo, showing a surprising knack for physical comedy, convulses and flails while struggling with Witherspoon's ghostly character.

Infinitely likable

At times the message about the importance of appreciating life is too obvious— if not for the intelligent presence and infinite likability of its two stars.

By now it's clear that Witherspoon can do pretty much anything, from drama to satire to light humor, but with "Just Like Heaven" she further solidifies herself as the romantic comedy queen.

Ruffalo continues to show his range beyond the dramatic roles in independent films—most notably "You Can Count on Me"—which have earned him justified universal praise. Together they bring weight and tenderness to a movie that could have been as ethereal as the fog that lingers over its San Francisco settings.

And director Mark Waters strikes a comedic tone that is—for the most part—the right balance of sweet and light on its feet.

Months after she's involved in a head-on crash, Elizabeth shows up back at her apartment, which Ruffalo's David is renting. She thinks David's some homeless guy who's been squatting at her place.

Funniest moments

The funniest moments come when Elizabeth follows David around in public, where no one can see or hear her but him.

David agrees to help Elizabeth figure out who she was and what happened to her. Their search for clues leads them to the house of a married, much older man, prompting her to wonder, "Maybe I was a slut—a lonely, homewrecking slut!"

Of course not. As the heroine of a romantic comedy, Elizabeth must have been an angel.

Christy Lemire, AP

("Just Like Heaven" opens on Wednesday in Metro Manila theaters.)

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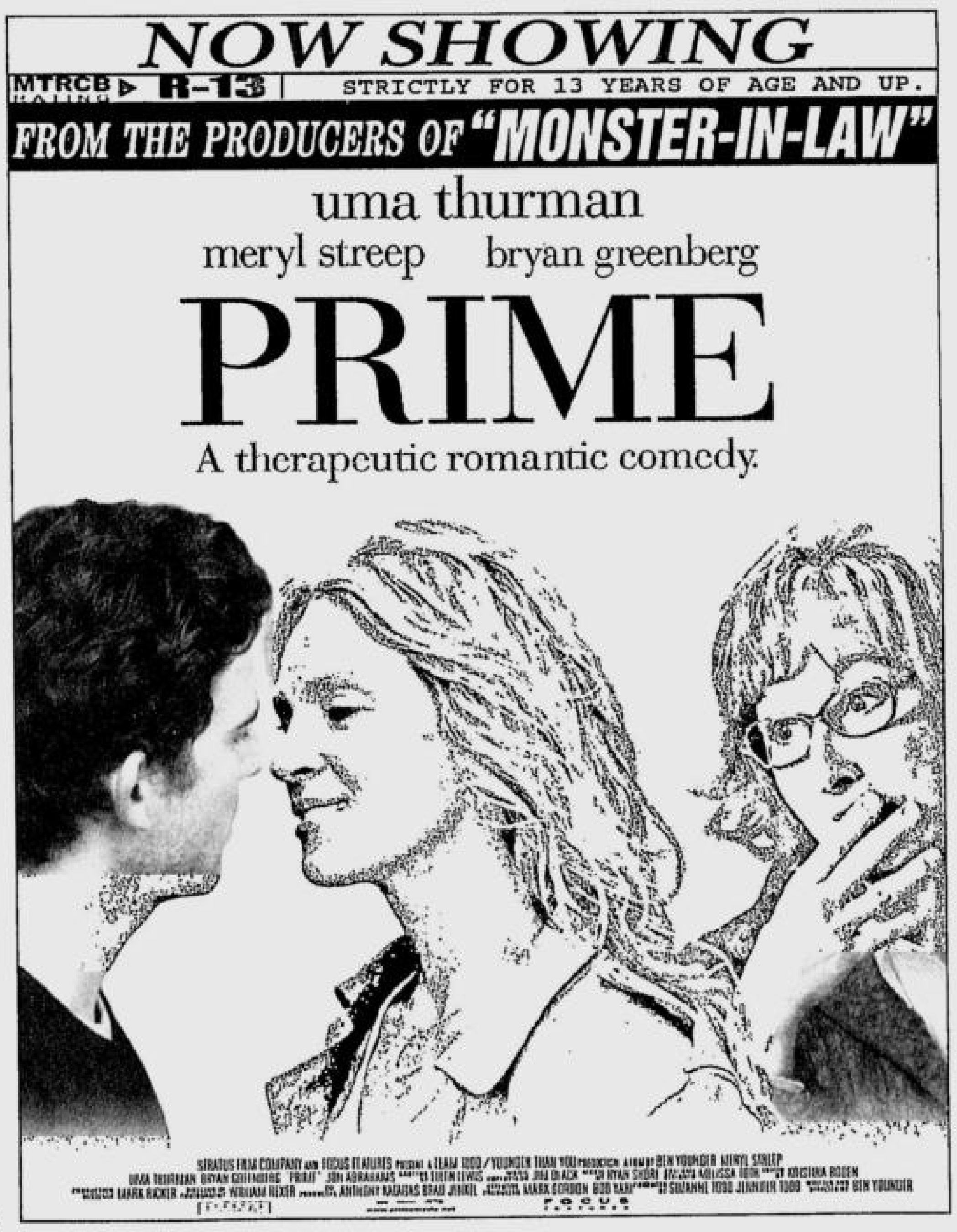

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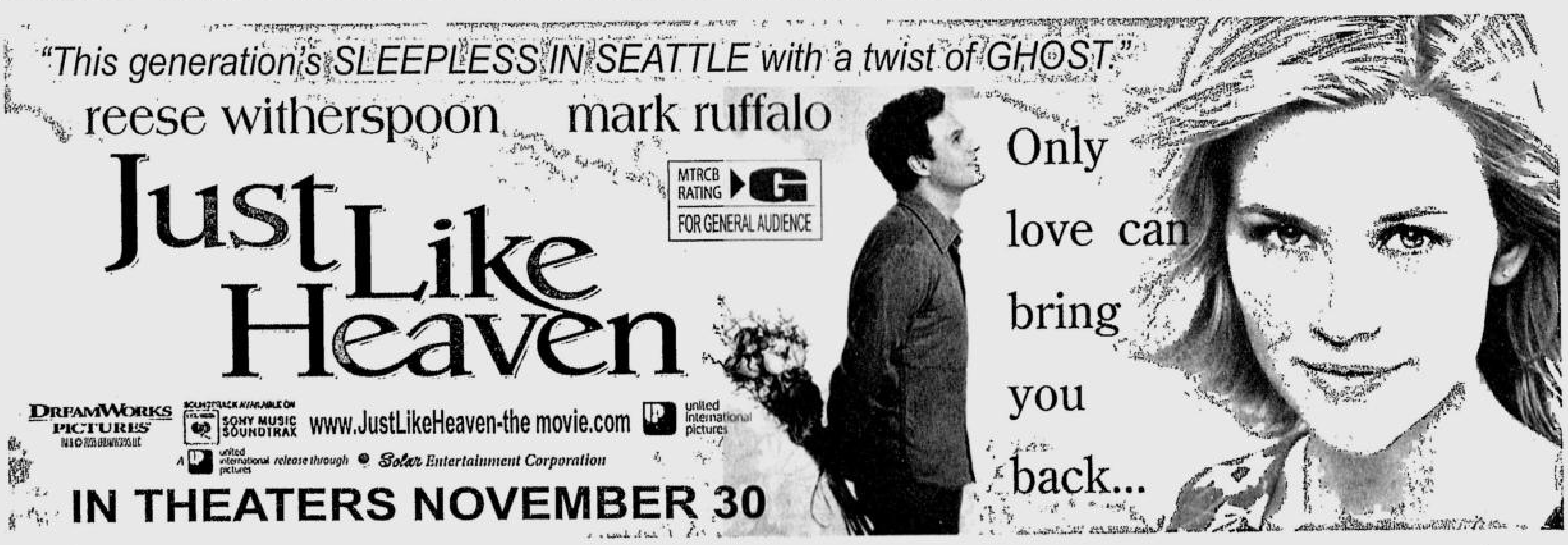

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IN THEATERS NOVEMBER 30

Porn on phone screens

WASHINGTON—THE SMALL SCREEN is heating up with a new wave of racy images and film clips making their way to mobile phones and the new video iPods, raising new questions for telecom companies and regulators.

Films, television shows and images are all making their way to the small screen, and analysts say that undoubtedly opens the door to pornography or other adult-oriented content.

Within days of the launch of Apple's new video iPod, companies were rushing to deliver content ranging from mild to shocking.

Explosive

"We think the growth of viewing adult content on iPod devices will be explosive in the coming months," said Harvey Kaplan of Xobile.com, which describes itself as "the leading provider of adult movies for mobile phones."

Kaplan said that the mobile phone market remains far larger than that of "portables," which include video iPods, Sony PlayStations and Windows-based portable video devices. But he said both segments are surging.

"We actively sign up about 20,000 new subscribers every month," Kaplan said, adding that three-fourths are from outside the United States. "We can deliver to any mobile phone anywhere in the world."

In the United States, he said the market has been limited by mobile phone companies that are reluctant to become partners with the porn industry for fear of being stigmatized and by community standards more staid that other parts of the world.

"In the US it's very slow, even for bikini-clad content," Kaplan said, adding that one mobile phone company that offered such an option raised community outrage. "Nobody wants to be the first company to allow adult content," he said.

Still, many companies are positioning for a growing market. Playboy struck deal this year for "iBod" photo galleries for the iPod photo device—which preceded the video iPod—and has a deal with Dwango Wireless to offer adult content for mobile phones.

Kaplan said a new rating system adopted this month by the cellular industry—which could allow parents to block sex-oriented content—would be a boon to the adult entertainment industry.

The Wireless Association announced guidelines for "generally accessible" and "restricted" content using criteria based on the movie, television, music and games rating systems. This allows carriers to requires parent or guardian permission to access any material inappropriate for subscribers under 18.

The move to create content categories that could allow filters "is fabulous for a company like ours," Kaplan said. "The chief thing we get accused of is going after children. The bottom line is that kids are the worst customers possible. They don't have credit cards or their cards are stolen. We don't want them to see the content."

Protecting minors

The research firm Research and Markets estimated a year ago that the "wireless adult content market" would be worth $90 million in the United States and $1 billion globally by 2008.

Yankee Group earlier this year estimated the US market for adult content at $192 million by 2009, but said growth would depend on whether wireless carriers take action to protect minors to avert government regulation.

But Jeff Kagan, an independent telecom analyst, said he sees the market moving slowly for erotic programming on mobile phones, even as the carriers start offering other types of films, music and television shows.

"The US carriers have all shied away form anything that would cause trouble or hurt their image," Kagan said. *AFP*

ROUNDUP

Bye, Mr. Miyagi

LOS ANGELES—Actor Pat Morita, who was nominated for an Academy Award for his portrayal of the wise and dry-witted Mr. Miyagi in "The Karate Kid," has died. He was 73.

His daughter Aly Morita said he died Thursday of heart failure at a Las Vegas hospital; longtime manager Arnold Soloway said the actor died of kidney failure at a hospital while awaiting a transplant.

His wife of 12 years, Evelyn, said in a statement that her husband had "dedicated his entire life to acting and comedy."

In 1984, he appeared in the role that would define his career and spawn countless affectionate imitations. As Kesuke Miyagi, the mentor to Ralph Macchio's "Daniel-san," he taught karate while trying to catch flies with chopsticks and offering such advice as "wax on, wax off" to guide Daniel through chores to improve his skills.

He lost the 1984 Best Supporting Actor award to Haing S. Ngor, who appeared in "The Killing Fields."

Morita "was a truly generous actor, a gifted comic, and an even greater friend," Macchio said in a statement. "It was both my honor and privilege to have worked with him and create a bit of cinema magic together."

Then, referring to Morita's MIyagi character, Macchio added: "Forever my Sensei." *AP*

Kudos to KNN

KABATAAN News Network was named one of 10 finalists in the 2005 Child Rights Award held recently in Hong Kong.

KNN was cited for its episode about families of OFWs.

The Child Rights Award is sponsored by Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union, Cable & Satellite Broadcasting Association of Asia and Unicef.

A project of Probe Media Foundation and Unicef Philippines, KNN airs Saturdays, 3 p.m., on ABC 5.

Rocket Man to wed BF

LONDON—British pop star Elton John plans to marry his long-term partner David Furnish on Dec. 21, the first day that civil partnerships between gay couples will be possible in England.

In an interview in Attitude magazine, which hits the newsstands on Friday, John said the ceremony would be a small, private affair involving only himself and Furnish and their parents acting as witnesses.

"Out of respect for [our parents'] support, we want to just keep it small—not to make a ballyhoo of the ceremony," he told the gay lifestyle magazine.

"There will be a party somewhere, but the day will be very low key and we'll take our parents to lunch afterwards."

The 58-year-old singer previously married Renate Blauel in 1984 but they divorced four years later. *Reuters*

It's official!

LOS ANGELES—After months of rumors, denials, and salacious magazine covers, Jessica Simpson and Nick Lachey are officially kaput.

The couple jointly announced their separation Wednesday, confirmed their publicists Meredith O' Sullivan and Rob Shooter.

"After three years of marriage, and careful thought and consideration, we have decided to part ways," Simpson and Lachey said in an official statement. *AP*

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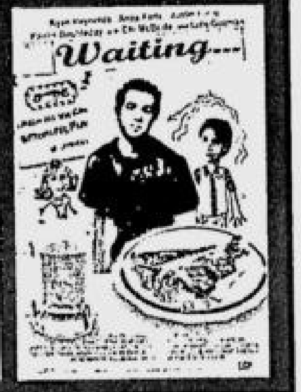
Cinema 3



GUARANTEED SEATS

THE PODIUM 633-8976
1 DOOM 11:30FS/12:00MF/02:15/04:30/06:45 08:30LFS/09:00LMF/10:45END
2 LEGEND OF ZORRO 12:15FS/12:45MF/03:30/06:15 08:30LFS/09:00LMF/11:15END

MEGAMALL
1 DOOM 10:30FS/10:50MF/01:05/03:20/5:35/07:50 09:35LFS/10:00LMF/11:45END

CEBU (032) 231-3876
1 THE KING & I Stage Play
2 SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL
3 TRANSPORTER 2 12:00FS/12:10MF/02:02/03:54/05:46/07:38 09:08LFS/09:30LMF/11:00END

METRO MANILA

SM MEGAMALL
1 DOOM
2 DEUCE BIGALOW
3 LEGEND OF ZORRO
4 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
5 ADVENTURE OF SHARK BOY & LAVA GIRL
6 LORD OF WAR
7 DUBAI
8 ISPIRITISTA
9 LEGEND OF ZORRO
10 DUNGEONS & DRAGONS
11 TRANSPORTER 2
12 MY SASSY GIRL

SM CITY STA. MESA
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 MY SASSY GIRL
3 DOOM
4 DUBAI
5 ISPIRITISTA
6 DEUCE BIGALOW
7 ADVENTURE OF SHARK BOY & LAVA GIRL
8 LORD OF WAR
9 LAND OF THE DEAD
10 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN

SM CITY BICUTAN
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 MY SASSY GIRL
4 DOOM

SM VALENZUELA
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 DOOM
3 ISPIRITISTA
4 ADVENTURE OF SHARK BOY & LAVA GIRL

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 ADVENTURE OF SHARK BOY & LAVA GIRL
2 LORD OF WAR
3 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
4 DOOM
5 DEUCE BIGALOW
6 ISPIRITISTA
7 LEGEND OF ZORRO
8 MY SASSY GIRL
9 DUBAI
10 LAND OF THE DEAD
11 DARK WATER
12 DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
2 LEGEND OF ZORRO
3 DUBAI
4 ISPIRITISTA
5 DOOM
6 MY SASSY GIRL
- ISPIRITISTA
8 DEUCE BIGALOW
9 ADVENTURE OF SHARK BOY & LAVA GIRL
10 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
LORD OF WAR

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
1 MY SASSY GIRL
2 LEGEND OF ZORRO
3 ISPIRITISTA
4 DOOM

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
4 DUBAI
5 MY SASSY GIRL
6 LORD OF WAR
7 DOOM
8 DEUCE BIGALOW

SM CITY MANILA
1 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
2 DOOM
3 INTO THE BLUE
4 LEGEND OF ZORRO
5 DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS
6 LEGEND OF ZORRO
7 ISPIRITISTA
8 DEUCE BIGALOW
9 ISPIRITISTA
10 MY SASSY GIRL
11 LORD OF WAR
12 DUBAI

SM CINEMA SAN LAZARO
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 DOOM
3 DEUCE BIGALOW
4 MY SASSY GIRL
5 DUBAI
6 ISPIRITISTA

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SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 LEGEND OF ZORRO
3 TRANSPORTER 2
4 DUBAI
5 ISPIRITISTA
6 ISPIRITISTA

SM CITY BAGUIO
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 PERFECT CATCH
4 LEGEND OF ZORRO

SM CITY BACOOR
1 LORD OF WAR
2 MY SASSY GIRL
3 LEGEND OF ZORRO
4 ISPIRITISTA
5 LEGEND OF ZORRO
6 ISPIRITISTA
7 DUBAI
8 DOOM

SM CITY MARILAO
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 ISPIRITISTA
4 PERFECT CATCH

SM CITY DASMARIÑAS
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 ISPIRITISTA
4 DOOM

SM CITY LUCENA
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 TIM BURTON'S CORPSE BRIDE
3 LAND OF THE DEAD
4 ISPIRITISTA

SM CITY BATANGAS
1 TIM BURTON'S CORPSE BRIDE
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 LEGEND OF ZORRO
4 DUBAI

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
1 KING AND I (Stage Play)
2 SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL
3 TRANSPORTER 2
4 DOOM
5 LORD OF WAR
6 DUBAI
7 ISPIRITISTA
8 LEGEND OF ZORRO

SM CITY ILOILO
ONE MISSED CALL 2
RESERVED
DUBAI
4 ISPIRITISTA
5 LEGEND OF ZORRO
6 DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS
RESERVED
8 BLADE OF ROSE

SM CITY DAVAO
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 UNDISCOVERED
3 ISPIRITISTA
4 LORD OF WAR
5 INTO THE BLUE
6 DUBAI

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
1 LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 CROW 4
3 ISPIRITISTA
4 TRANSPORTER 2

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CINEMA 4 The EXORCISM of Emily Rose PG13 - 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00
CINEMA 5 HARRY POTTER & The GOBLET OF FIRE GP - 12:00, 3:20, 6:40, 10:00
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November 25, 2005 JIMMY BONDOC 8PM
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1 HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE MTRCB GP 11:00, 2 30, 6:00, 9:30 LMF
2 CHICKEN LITTLE MTRCB GP 11 55, 1 50, 3 45, 5 40, 7 35, 9 30
3 F FILM FESTIVAL
4 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE MTRCB PG-13 10.40, 1:30, 4.20, 7:10, 10.00
PREMIERE THEATRE PRIME MTRCB R-13 1:40, 4:10, 6:40, 9.10
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MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
1 PRIME 12:15, 2:50, 5:25, 8:00, 10:35 R-13
2 HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE 12:45, 4:10, 7:35, 11:00 GP
3 CHICKEN LITTLE SNEAK PREVIEW 12:10, 2:20, 4:30, 6:40, 8:50, 11:00 GP
4 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE 11:55, 2:45, 5:35, 8:25, 11:00 PG-13

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PRIME PG13 12:30,2:50,5:10,7:30,9:50	CHICKEN LITTLE GP 12:15,2:15,4:15, 6:15,8:15,10:00	HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE GP 11:30,2:40,5:50,9:00
EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE PG13 12:15,2:45,5:15, 7:45,10:15	THE MYTH PG13 12:15,2:45,5:15, 7:45,10:15	CHICKEN LITTLE GP 11:15,1:15,3:15,5:15 HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE GP 7:00 10:10

"CHICKEN LITTLE" - Sneak Preview November 28 & 29

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G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 THE MYTH	2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE	3 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE	4 CHICKEN LITTLE
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 CHICKEN LITTLE	2 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE	3 THX HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE 12 45, 4 00, 10 00 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 THE MYTH	5 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE	6 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE	7 PRIME
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 THE MYTH 12:40, 3:10, 5:40, 8:10	2 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE 11 20, 2 30, 5 40, 8 50		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE 1 20, 3 50, 6 20, 8 50, 11 20 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE 12,20, 3 30, 6 40, 10 00 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 PRIME 2 00, 4 20, 6 40, 9 00, 11 20 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 CHICKEN LITTLE 1 20, 3,10, 5 00, 6 50, 8 50, 10 30 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 HARRY POTTER 4 1 20, 4 30, 7 40, 11 00 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX CHICKEN LITTLE	2 EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE		
	3 THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE	4 PRIME	5 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE	2 THE MYTH	3 FOUR BROTHERS	4 HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE

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② THE EXORCISM OF EMILY ROSE
③ PRIME
④ HARRY POTTER & THE GOBLET OF FIRE
⑤ THE MYTH

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GALLERIA 632-9116

1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2• THX
1:30 4:20 7:20 10:00

2 ISPIRITISTA
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

3 DEUCE BIGALOW 2
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

4 MY SASSY GIRL
1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

5 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
11:10 2:00 4:50 7:50 10:30

6 DOOM
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

7 LORD OF WAR
12:20 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

8 MASAHISTA
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

9 THE 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
12.00 2:25 5:05 7:45 10:00

10 TRANSPORTER 2
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO
12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00

2 MY SASSY GIRL
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

3 LORD OF WAR
12:25 2:45 5:05 7:25 10:00

4 DEUCE BIGALOW 2
12:00 2.00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

5 ISPIRITISTA
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

6 DOOM
12:35 2 50 5:05 7:25 10:00

7 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
11:00 1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 LORD OF WAR
1:40 4:10 6:35 9:00

2 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO
12:55 3:35 6:15 9:00

3 ISPIRITISTA
10:45 1:20 3:55 6:30 9:05

4 DEUCE BIGALOW 2
12:15 2:00 3:45 5:30 7:15 9:00

5 DOOM
11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

6 THE 40 YEAR OLD VIRGIN
12.20 2:30 4:40 6:50 9:00

7 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
12:05 2:45 5:25 8:05

8 MY SASSY GIRL
1:05 3:45 6:25 9:05

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 DOOM
3 DEUCE BIGALOW 2
4 LORD OF WAR
5 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 ISPIRITISTA
2 DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS 2
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378

1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 MY SASSY GIRL
3 DOOM
4 ISPIRITISTA

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Cinema 1 The Legend of Zorro 2
Cinema 2 Ispiritista
Cinema 3 Doom
Cinema 4 Deuce Bigalow 2
Cinema 5 Lord of War

STA. ROSA (049) 837-0907

1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO
2 CORPSE BRIDE
3 A SOUND OF THUNDER
4 ISPIRITISTA

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 THE DESCENT
4 CORPSE BRIDE

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-4332

1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
2 CORPSE BRIDE
3 ISPIRITISTA
4 DOOM

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 MASAHISTA
4 TRANSPORTER 2

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 ISPIRITISTA
2 WILD SIDE
3 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
4 DOOM

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-6270

1 ISPIRITISTA
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 MASAHISTA
4 TRANSPORTER 2
5 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
6 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459

1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
2 INTO THE BLUE
3 ISPIRITISTA
4 LORD OF WAR
5 LAND OF THE DEAD
6 TRANSPORTER 2

ILOILO (033) 336-8070

1 THE LEGEND OF ZORRO 2
2 ISPIRITISTA
3 BLADE OF THE ROSE
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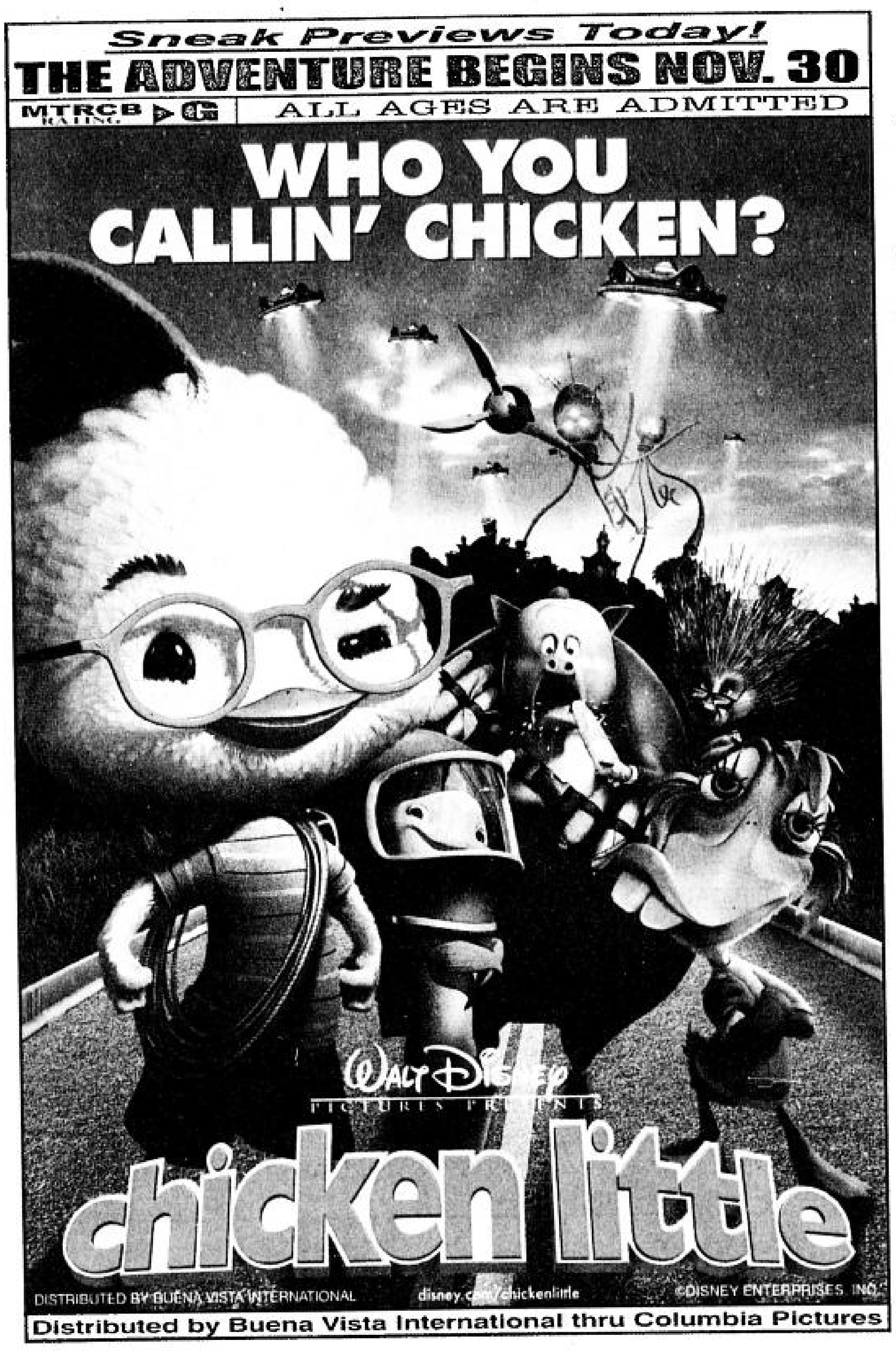
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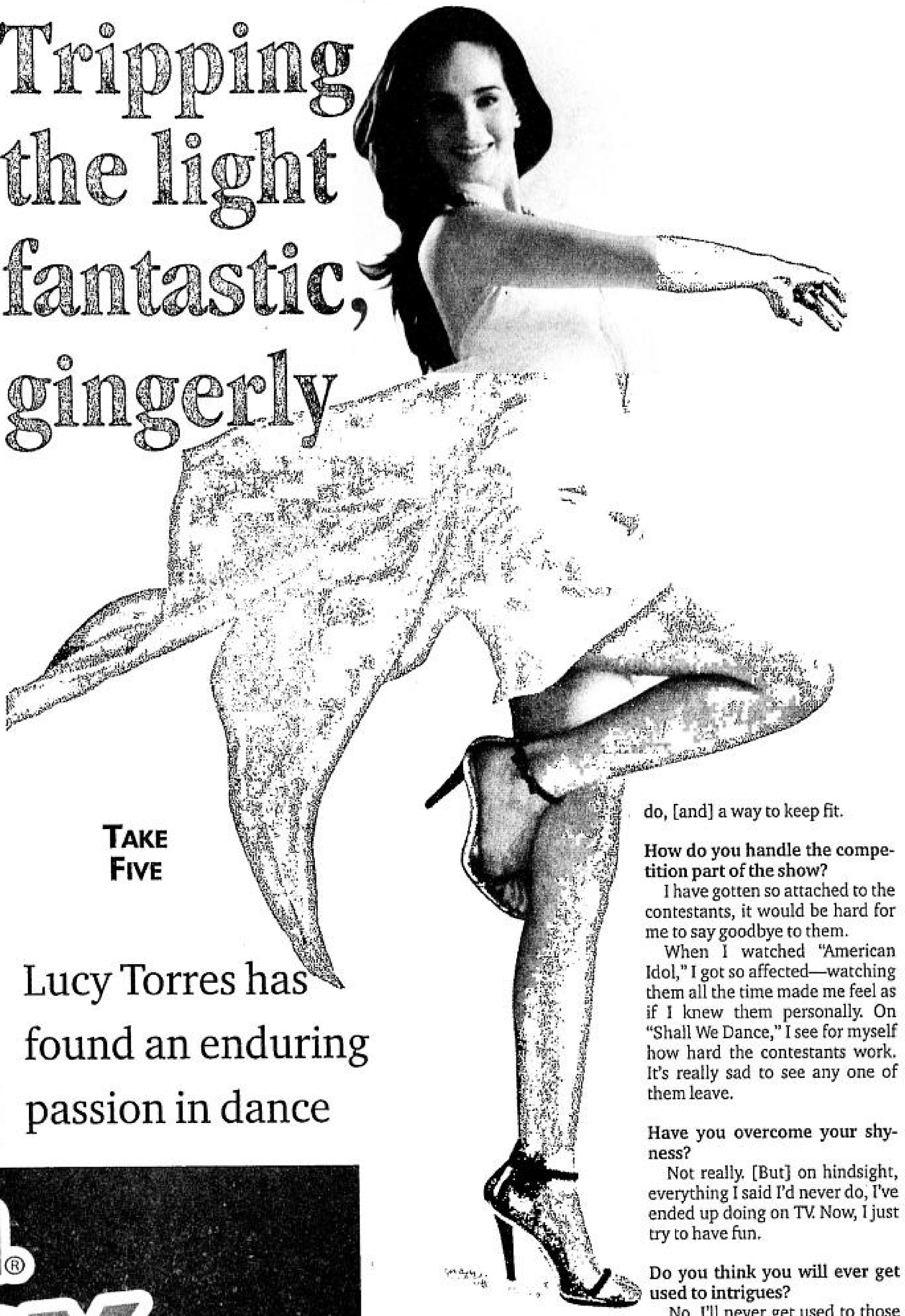
Tripping the light fantastic, gingerly



TAKE FIVE

Lucy Torres has found an enduring passion in dance

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

FORGET THE intrigues. Lucy Torres-Gomez is forging ahead with her show biz career and has found an enduring passion in dance. On the ABC 5 celebrity-dance contest, "Shall We Dance?" (Sunday nights), Lucy trips the light fantastic and gives husband Richard Gomez a run for the money as TV host.

Have you always liked dancing?

I have, but I never took formal lessons until three years ago when I took up flamenco. In ballroom dancing, I absolutely have no background. I had to start from scratch.

Flamenco and ballroom are two totally different dance styles.

In flamenco, the moves are rigid. In ballroom, the arms are more relaxed. Flamenco is more fiery and passionate.

Who are the flamenco dancers you admire?

Sara Baras. My husband and I have seen her perform. I also look up to my flamenco teacher, Clara Ramona.

What's the biggest challenge in hosting a dance show?

I find the hosting part easy because I'm used to it. But I have to psyche myself up for the ballroom dancing part because I'm basically very shy. I never took up dance with the intention of performing for an audience.

It was just something I loved to do, [and] a way to keep fit.

How do you handle the competition part of the show?

I have gotten so attached to the contestants, it would be hard for me to say goodbye to them.

When I watched "American Idol," I got so affected—watching them all the time made me feel as if I knew them personally. On "Shall We Dance," I see for myself how hard the contestants work. It's really sad to see any one of them leave.

Have you overcome your shyness?

Not really. [But] on hindsight, everything I said I'd never do, I've ended up doing on TV. Now, I just try to have fun.

Do you think you will ever get used to intrigues?

No. I'll never get used to those things. There is nothing that'll keep me from getting hurt. I know it will still be painful with the next one, even though I've been through the worst.

The rumors about you were so detailed and elaborate.

I feel that there is only so much I can do. If people really want to make up stories and grab things from thin air, nothing will stop them. At the end of the day, what matters is that I can sleep with a clear conscience. It's actually better that I'm the victim and not the one victimizing people because I'm scared of karma.

How does your husband show that he supports you?

He understands that I cannot come home as early as I should. After watching my show, he gives me tips, very technical tips on lighting and spiels. He tells me I should speak in Tagalog more often to reach more people.

How's Juliana?

My daughter comes with me to rehearsals. She also takes flamenco lessons.

How many kids do you plan to have? Do you feel pressured by these questions?

I'm not pressured because I really want to have more kids. It's just that it can be frustrating because it's not happening yet. But, all in God's time… If I could have my way, I'd like to have six! But Richard says he's fine with four.

How do you describe Richard and yourself as parents?

We're both very loving. Richard can be more firm. I tend to bend too easily, which isn't good. My daughter, I think, doesn't fear me. She thinks of me more as a *ka-barkada*.

A Genesis reunion possible

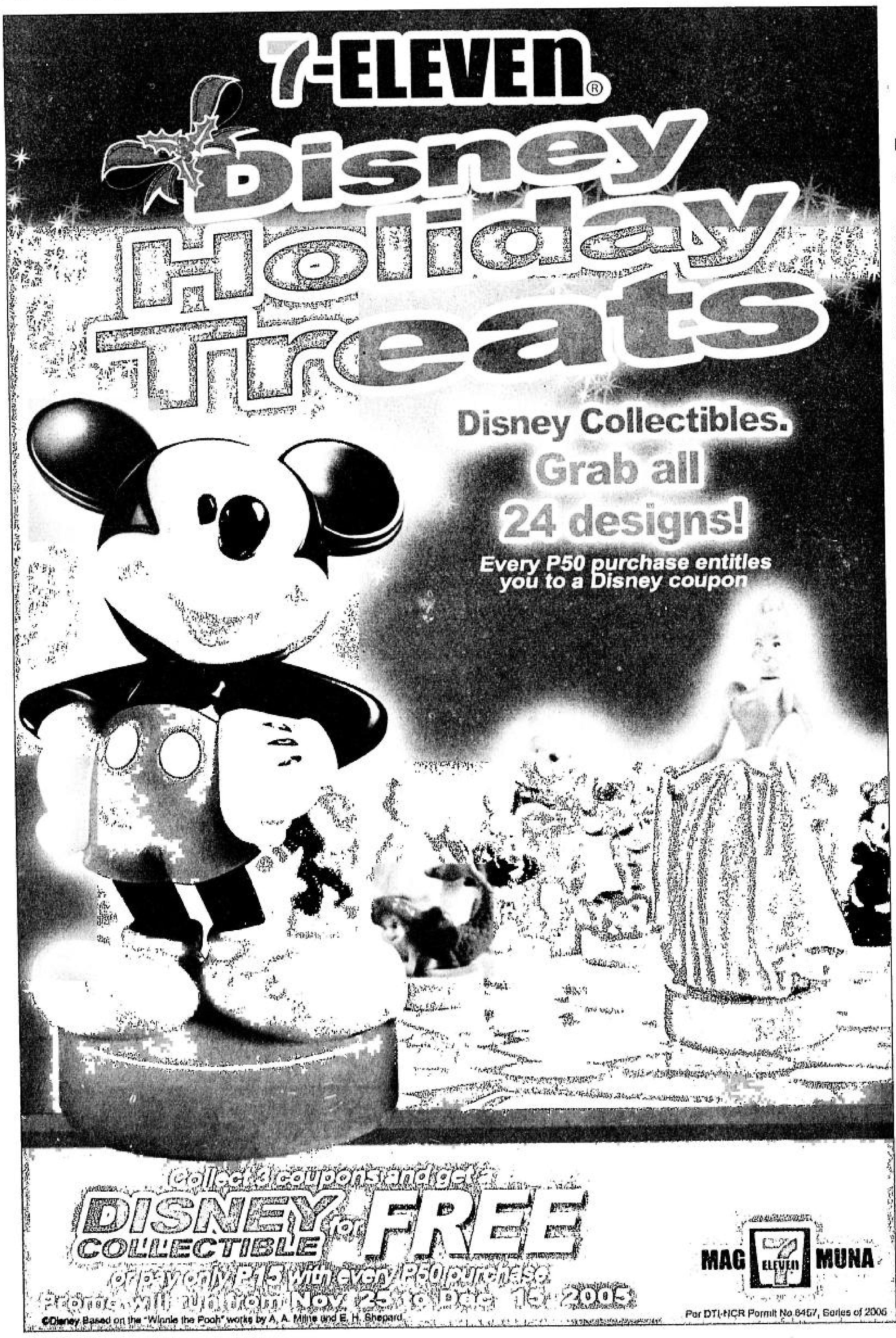
CHEER FACTOR

JERUSALEM—BRITISH singer-songwriter Phil Collins, who is touring the Middle East, has said he was open to a reunion with his bandmates from Genesis.

"There's a possibility. I'm open to it," Collins said ahead of a concert in Tel Aviv.

"I'm happy to sit behind the drum kit and let Peter (Gabriel) be the singer. If it happens, I'll be there. If it doesn't, it won't be because we don't want to. It will just be because there are too many things in the way," he said.

Genesis formed in 1967, and disbanded in 1998. Collins fronted the band after lead singer Gabriel left to pursue a solo career in 1975. *AP*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Banks' bad loans at ₱170.6B

End-Sept. level equivalent to 9.4% of total loans

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE NON-PERFORMING LOANS OF COMMERcial banks stood at P170.62 billion in end-September, or 9.43 percent of their total loan portfolio, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said.

Although slightly higher than the 9.4 percent a month ago, the BSP noted that this was a substantial improvement from the 13.87-percent NPL ratio in September 2004.

The banking system's NPL ratio eased to a single-digit level after seven years as the special purpose vehicle (SPV) mode allowed the unloading of P95 billion in bad assets since last year.

The NPL ratio peaked at 18.81 percent in October 2001 but started to ease sharply starting last year as banks scrambled to avail themselves of the SPV incentives, which expired last April.

The SPV Law waived the documentary stamp tax, the capital gains tax and the expanded VAT on asset transfers and likewise reduced the registration and transfer fees by 50 percent.

The slight increase in the NPL ratio was due to a 2.1-percent contraction in total loan portfolio that outpaced the 1.8-percent reduction in NPLs from a month ago.

Net of inter-bank loans, the NPL ratio also went up to 11.34

BANKS/ B3

WHAT'S INSIDE

Lorenzo's gravy /B3

Firm sinks in P300M for mine repair /B4

₱800-M call center building to rise in Mall of Asia

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

HENRY SY

THE SM GROUP OF MALL TYCOON Henry Sy Sr. is spending P800 million to put up a 10-story building for the burgeoning call center industry at its massive Mall of Asia project along Roxas Boulevard.

SM Investments Corp. finance chief Jose Sio said the building would specifically be designed for call center companies that have been looking at the Philippines for their expansion.

"The rental rates will be lower than Makati rates," Sio said. Sio estimates that the cost per square meter at the new building would be roughly P12,000.

The Philippine call center unit of Dell Inc., the world's biggest manufacturer of personal computers, will be in the Mall of Asia complex. Dell will initially lease 13,000 square meters, but it is not clear if the computer giant would locate to the new call center building, which will have a total floor area of 100,000 square meters.

Dell's Philippine call center, its second in Asia, will handle calls form the company's customers in the United States and will hire 700 people.

This may help boost customer traffic in the Mall of Asia, the most ambitious project of SM Prime Holdings Inc., the country's biggest shopping mall operator.

SM Prime is set to open the Mall of Asia, which sits on a 60-hectare property overlooking Manila Bay, by February next year.

The mall is designed to become not just the Philippines' biggest, but also the most complete and innovative shopping complex.

P800-M/ B4

INDICATORS

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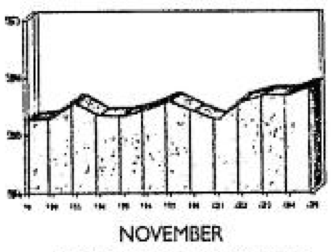


NOVEMBER

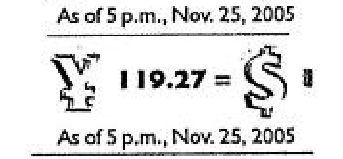
PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 54.15 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Nov. 25, 2005

¥ 119.27 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Nov. 25, 2005

GOLD: $495.10-495.60
per ounce Hong Kong, Nov. 25, 2005

STOCK MARKET



(See stock market report on Page B7)

Stocks seen to continue rally

EVEN WITH A SHORTENED WEEK, THE STOCK market is expected to continue its uptrend on prospects for lower interest rates and a stronger peso.

Jojo Gonzales, president of Philippine Equity Partners Inc., said the Bangko Sentral's improved outlook on inflation was expected to ease pressure on interest rates. Lower interest rates lessen costs for companies that borrow money for expansion.

Bangko Sentral Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said on Friday consumer prices were expected to rise by 6.4 to 6.9 percent year-on-year in November, below last month's 7 percent, due to lower prices of crude and stable food prices.

The National Statistics Office is scheduled to release the consumer price index (CPI) data for November on Dec. 6.

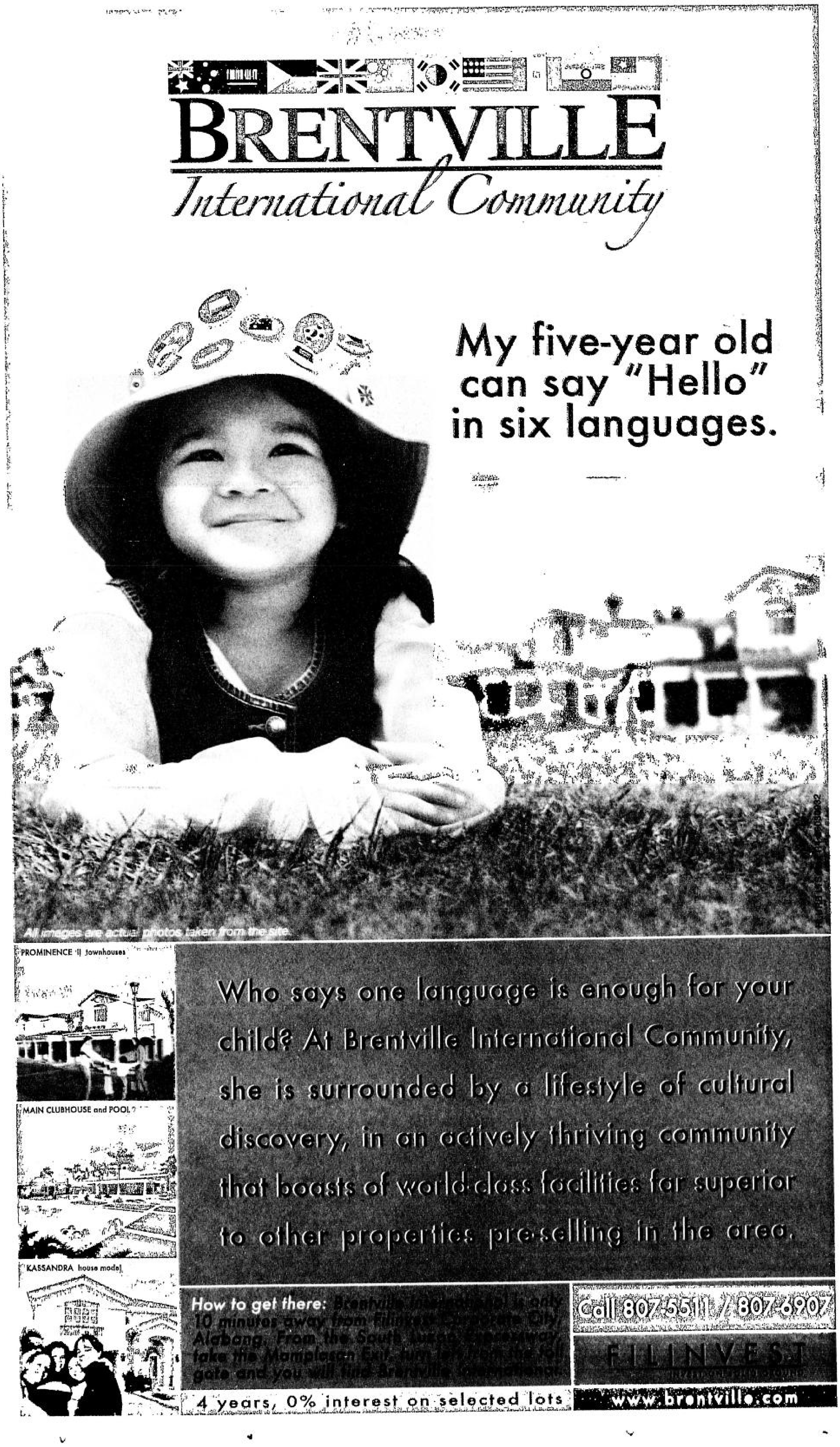
The recent decline in oil prices has triggered a lower inflation forecast by the BSP for 2006 to 7.6 to 8.3 percent from 8 to 8.5 percent.

Gonzales also said the peso's strength was sending a positive signal to market investors.

Investors are also expected to buy up shares of new companies that will be included in the Philippine Stock Exchange composite index.

Among these are two companies of mall magnate Henry Sy (Banco De Oro and SM In-

STOCKS/ B3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Banks investing more FCDUs in T-bills, bonds, BSP says

By Doris C. Dumlao

LOCAL BANKS ARE INVESTING more of their foreign currency deposit units in marketable securities, such as treasury bills and dollar-denominated bonds, according to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

BSP data showed that FCDUs invested in marketable securities jumped to 22.8 percent of total assets at the end of June this year from 12.7 percent in the same period last year.

On the other hand, the share of investments held to maturity declined to 22.8 percent from 35.5 percent during the same period, due to new regulations issued by the BSP which made it more expensive for banks to convert these into easily tradeable accounts.

"Investments were likewise preferred over loans as indicated by the decrease in the share of total loan portfolio (including inter-bank loans) to total assets i.e. to 36.3 percent from 35.8 percent during the same period (last year), " the BSP reported.

Total assets held by the FCDU system hit an all-time high of $21.22 billion at end-June, 11 percent more than the year-ago level.

About 96.7 percent of these assets was held by commercial banks, and the balance was held by thrift banks.

The bulk of these assets worth $10.87 billion represented net investments as against a net loan portfolio of only $3.4 billion.

The major beneficiaries of the FCDU system's lending activities were manufacturing (36.7 percent); utilities (17.9 percent) and transportation, storage and communication (12 percent).

Prior to the 1997 crisis, banks aggressively lent in foreign currencies, particularly to real estate companies, encouraged by the stable exchange rate and the lack of reserve requirement on FCDU deposits.

When the currency crisis hit, many companies that were saddled with heavy dollar debts had to seek a restructuring or even court-assisted rehabilitation.

Foreign-currency loan demand also slumped due to the protracted impact of the Asian crisis, prompting banks to invest in higher-yielding marketable securities and to lend to each other.

Keeping up with the neighbors

No Free Lunch

Cielito F Habito

I WAS IN INDONESIA AND THAILAND LAST week, and as always, came out feeling depressed and jealous.

In Indonesia, I noted that the entire road to Bogor, some 60 kilometers out of the capital, was a 2- to 3-lane expressway.

None of our expressways in the country goes that far.

My daily trip to work from my home in Los Baños, 55 km out of Magallanes, still involves some 12 km of a congested two-way "highway."

That stretch, which is just about a fifth of the way, already takes up about half the travel time.

Later in the week, still in Indonesia, I also found myself passing two expressways that actually crossed each other—something unheard of in our country.

We still boast a slightly higher average income than our Southern neighbor, and yet we now clearly lag well behind it in road infrastructure.

Out of the league

Flying on later to Thailand, the vast multitude of arriving tourists had us wait in line at the immigration counters for about an hour—and we had arrived at midnight!

I could only shake my head in jealousy as I saw for myself how far we have fallen behind this other neighbor of ours in attracting tourists. Bangkok also now boasts a subway system, in addition to its impressive "Skytrain" MRT that puts our own LRT-MRT system to shame by its superior efficiency.

And I remembered how way back in 1992, I and a couple of colleagues had gone on a study tour of some Thai villages, passing through hours and hours of expressways, a large part of it elevated.

Forget about Singapore and Malaysia; they are now out of our league. A visit to these neighbors of ours invariably leaves any Filipino with the same depressed and jealous feeling because of the glaring disparity, which is immediately apparent the moment you step out of the plane and into their impressive airport terminals.

Three things wrong

What is wrong with Philippine infrastructure? To my mind, there are three things wrong: One, we simply don't have enough of them; two, they are not integrated and coordinated, and three, they are improperly distributed.

Why don't we have enough infrastructure? To begin with, our government doesn't have enough money for it. Too many taxpayers cheat on their taxes, and too many people in government keep for themselves whatever taxpayers decide to shell out.

This one we can all blame on ourselves, and we all need to make fundamental changes in ourselves to get out of it.

Second, too much of our budget simply goes to repair and maintenance of calamity-damaged infrastructure year after year.

This problem is somewhat unique to us, as none of our more progressive neighbors has to contend with the number of typhoons and floods we have to face every year. There is little we can do about this one; it is one of our misfortunes as a nation.

Third, too much of our infrastructure is below standard (and that's why they are so easily damaged and have to be repaired and rebuilt so often) because too many people want to make money out of every construction project.

No coherence

It's bad enough that we don't have enough infrastructure. We also cannot get the most out of what little we have because they are not well integrated and coordinated.

In the 1990s, we began putting together the blueprint of a seamless multi-modal transport system for the country, so that one can easily move from, say, rail transport to air or water transport by ensuring that the various modes of transport connect to one another.

It's a shame that not even our existing mass rail transit lines in Metro Manila connect to one another seamlessly. And it still makes many people wonder why we cannot build another several hundred meters of railway that could have connected our airports to the LRT line.

Unfortunately, the integrated multi-modal system we envisaged then apparently remains largely a blueprint to this day.

The third problem is that our infrastructure is not properly distributed, whether on grounds of efficiency or equity.

For obvious reasons, the lion's share of our infrastructure budget goes to Metro Manila projects, something our Mindanao friends have always loudly complained about.

We did make a conscious effort in the 90s to devote a growing share of the infrastructure budget to Mindanao, which resulted in a more than doubling of the share between the start and end of the Ramos administration. But the other problem is in the way infrastructure allocation is too often determined by political considerations—thanks to the pork barrel and the "congressional initiative" system—rather than the objective criteria that our planners painstakingly develop and attempt, unsuccessfully, to apply.

Private sector participation

So what's our way out of this predicament? Paying our taxes faithfully is a good place to start.

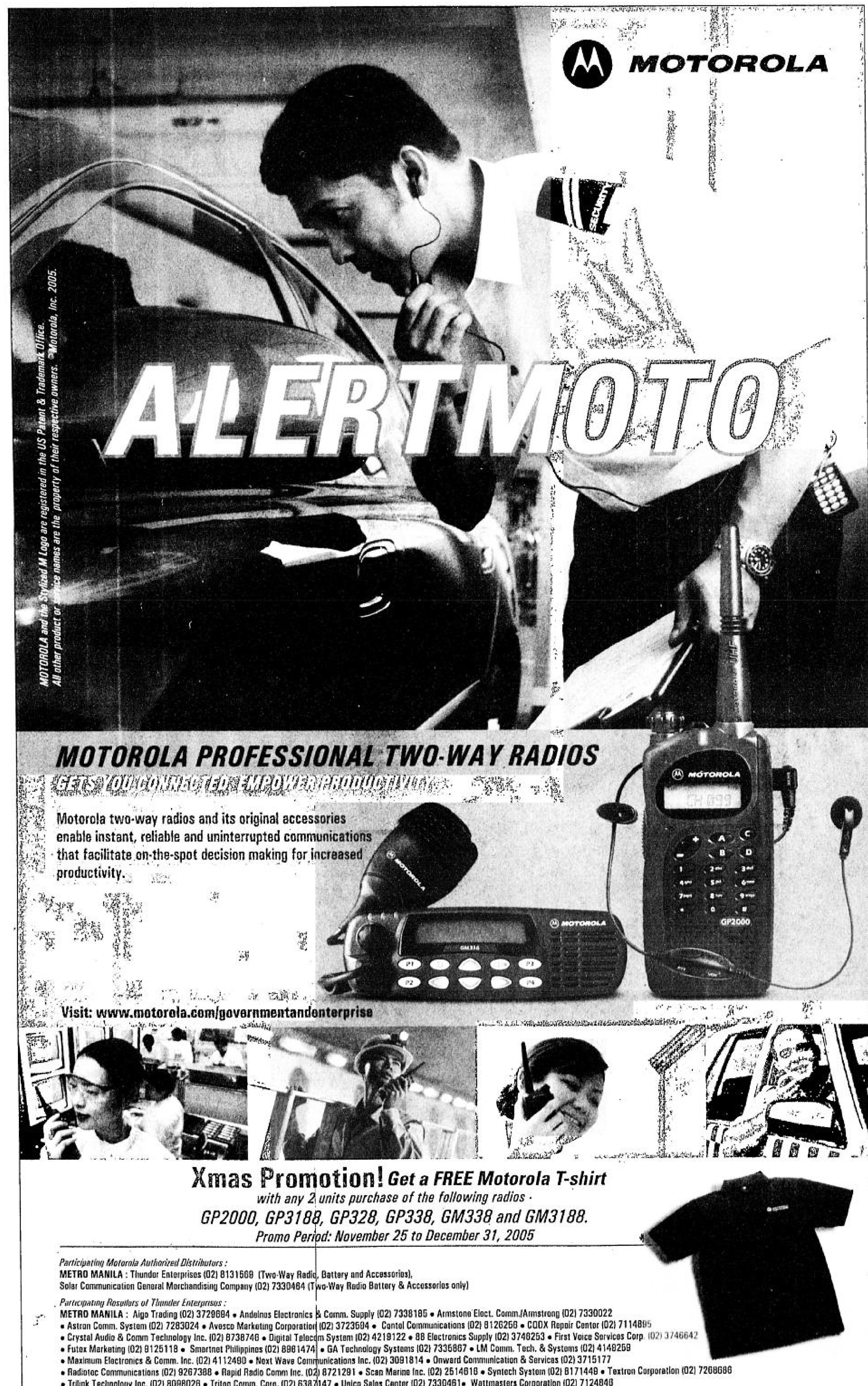
Many of those who benefit most from our various forms of infrastructure are probably among the biggest evaders of taxes as well.

Until we are able to dramatically improve on our tax compliance and collection, our next best bet is to continue tapping private sector resources to provide much of our needed infrastructure via the Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) scheme and its variants.

But we also need to recognize that the cost of infrastructure has to be recovered from direct users (i.e. through the proper tolls and fees), if we cannot get it from the general taxpayers.

And yet some of the biggest complainers on highway tolls are those who have been getting much more than their money's worth from these facilities.

Good infrastructure comes at a cost. Yet another illustration that there's no such thing as a free lunch. *Comments are welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu*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PAL to stay under SEC supervision

By Clarissa S. Batino

PHILIPPINE AIRLINES HAS DECIDED TO complete its 10-year debt rehabilitation program ending in 2009 as the aviation industry remains hobbled by uncertainties such as high fuel prices and shrinking volume caused by the bird flu scare.

PAL president Jaime Bautista said the flag carrier recently met officials of the Securities and Exchange Commission to discuss whether or not the company would like to get out of SEC supervision.

Last year, PAL wanted to cut short the 10-year rehabilitation period as some of the terms of the program were restricting its expansion plans.

"We are completing our 10-year rehab. For the meantime, we have also decided to stay within the SEC protection," Bautista said in an interview.

The SEC supervision, he clarified, was different from the rehabilitation.

The country's biggest airline had asked creditors a couple of years ago to restructure its loans and extend the maturity by three years. Bautista said not all lenders have agreed to the extension.

He said PAL therefore had no choice but to stay under SEC protection for now.

PAL, Asia's oldest airline, was forced to go into rehabilitation in 1999 following crippling labor problems and its failure to settle debts totaling $2.2 billion. The rehabilitation called for a $200-million fresh equity provided by its owner Lucio Tan.

Like any company under rehabilitation, the flag carrier is barred from incurring new loans and every material decision like the purchase of new airplanes or flying to new routes had to be approved by creditors.

The US Export Import Bank and a group of European export credit agencies account for nearly two-thirds of PAL's $2.2-billion debt. About $400 million is owed to local banks.

Of the total debt, PAL managed to reduce its obligations to about $1 billion. Bautista said the airline had been paying debts as they fell due.

The flag carrier reported a $4.5-million net loss in the second quarter (July to September 2005) of its fiscal year ending March 2006. In the first quarter (April to June 2005), it registered a net income of $27.5 million. With the second quarter losses, PAL's first half earnings stood at $23 million.

Despite the second quarter losses, PAL's first half performance already surpassed its full-year net profit of P1.2 billion from April 2004 to March 2005.

The SEC had allowed PAL to prepare its financial statement in US dollars given that more than 70 percent of the flag carrier's revenues are denominated in foreign currencies due to its thriving overseas operations.

Bautista said he was worried that PAL's profitability was still threatened by expensive jet fuel even if oil prices had eased slightly.

On top of that, he said, September, October and November were lean months for travel.

"There are so many uncertainties. It is best if we finish the rehab and stay within SEC's monitoring," he noted.

Banks . . .

From page B1

percent from 11.16 percent in August.

Meanwhile, the ratio of restructured loans to total loans rose to 5.95 percent from the previous month's 5.93 percent as the reduction in total loans offset the 1.7-percent reduction in restructured loans. But non-performing restructured loans fell to 45.93 percent as a ratio of total restructured loans or 0.8 percentage points better than a month ago.

The ratio of real and other properties owned or acquired (ropoa) to gross assets moved up to 5.07 percent from the previous month's 5.02 percent as the 1.3-percent contraction in gross assets overshadowed the 0.3-percent reduction in gross ropoa.

With rising foreclosures, the industry's non-performing assets also went up as a ratio of total assets to 9.19 percent from 9.16 percent. Total NPAs amounted to P361.71 billion from P365.44 billion a month ago.

Bankers are lobbying in Congress to revive the SPV Law to speed up the sale of the remaining bad assets. If this happens, the BSP expects the banking system to unload another P100 billion in bad assets, trimming the bad loan ratio to about 7.5 percent.

Stocks . . .

From page B1

vestments Corp.), Ayala-led utility firm Manila Water Co., Smart subsidiary Pilipino Telephone Corp., and Philex Mining Corp.

Grace Cerdenia of 2TradeAsia.com said the Phisix might trade within a narrow range between 2,080 and 2,100 this week.

"Second-tier stocks tied to prospects within property and finance might take center stage, specifically those involved in construction and utilities management," she said.

Last week, the Phisix rose 26.1 points or 1.25 percent with mining issues taking center stage due to the rise in gold and copper prices. The mining index gained 5.5 percent last week.

"What makes the recent trend spectacular for gold watchers is the fact that the gold price rally in the last few months came at the same time the dollar continued to strengthen against world currencies," AB Capital Securities wrote.

Cerdenia said stable interest rates, tamer movement in crude futures prices and an appreciating peso would help support the economy and, in turn, perk up interest in the stock market.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

Lorenzo's gravy

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

MARTIN LORENZO, THE PANCAKE House CEO, picked up P21.6 million in cash last week, in time for Christmas shopping.

Lorenzo on Friday sold to undisclosed parties 6 million shares of the listed restaurant chain at P3.60, following analysts' advice to increase the float of the hitherto hardly traded stock.

Despite the disposal, Lorenzo's Pancake House Holdings is still left holding about 73.43 percent of the shares, still way too much for the stock to be considered a staple in the investment portfolios of foreign brokerages.

Despite or probably because of its illiquidity, the share price of Pancake House has more than doubled from the P1.60 level that it was trading only in mid-October.

At Friday's close of P3.85, the 40-year-old Lorenzo's personal holdings has now risen to more than P533 million. Like yeast, the fortunes of Finance Undersecretary Gabriel Singson Jr., one of the Pancake House pre-IPO originals, also quickly burbled along with the bullish trend.

Son of and named after the former central bank governor, Singson's Pancake fortune is now worth nearly P48 million.

The younger (and some say, the better) Singson, like Lorenzo another Wharton nerdish whiz kid, also just turned 40 this year.

Lepanto deconsolidated

RED-HOT gold is now close to touching $500 an ounce, and the country's biggest gold producer, Lepanto Consolidated, should be sharing in the windfall, right?

Wrong.

Lepanto even expects to lose P136 million this year, because somebody in the company made the wrong hedging bet.

This year's loss, expected to reach P440 million in all, is on top of the $24 million (more than P1.3 billion) mark-to-market loss the mining venture incurred, because the forward gold contract it had forged before the commodity boom was pegged at $295 an ounce.

By end-2004, gold was already selling at $437, spot. No wonder even the normally unflappable Lepanto director, TV talk show host Ricardo "Dong" Puno Jr., has lately been heard grumbling over Lepanto's governance.

Lepanto's stock has been languishing in the 22-centavo level, half the yearend 2004-value when a secretive shareholder pocketed P1.2 billion after F.Yap Securities crossed a 2.66-percent block for P0.4505/share.

After investigation, the Securities and Exchange Commission later ruled that it had found no evidence of insider-dealing against certain company officials.

Money-go-round

- NORTHWEST, still toiling under bankruptcy protection, is determined to sell every available seat out of Manila this Yuletide season.

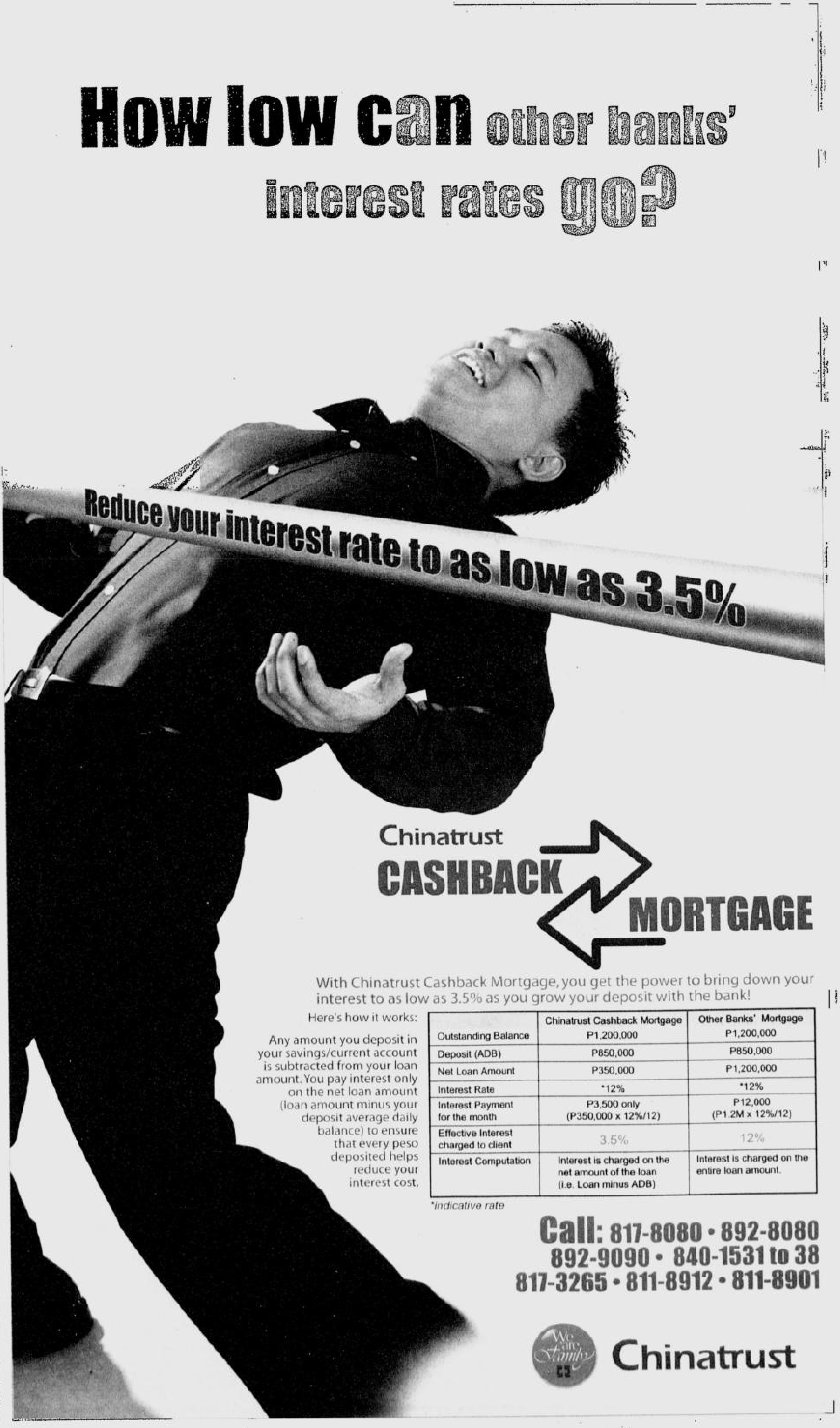
Its latest gimmick: Buy-one, take-one economy fare to Hawaii and the West Coast for $1060, effectively $530 per person. Tickets valid for Dec. 1-31 departure.

- HSBC is flying in its Asia-Pacific chair, Vincent Cheng, and CNN talk show host Lorraine Hahn, to celebrate the bank's 130th year in the country tomorrow at the Makati Shangri-La.

Heard through the grapevine

DEL MONTE Philippines chair Martin Lorenzo puts the family's chances of blocking the First Pacific takeover of the Singapore-listed food and juice conglomerate at "50-50." "No matter what the outcome of the Del Monte transaction, I still have the utmost respect for (First Pacific CEO) Manuel V. Pangilinan ... and I look forward to working with him in the future should an opportunity arise," he said.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)



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RAPU RAPU POLYMETALLIC PLANT

Firm sinks in ₱300M for mine repair

By Christine A. Gaylican

LAFAYETTE PHILIPPINES INC. HAS sunk in more than P300 million to repair its mine infrastructure and improve the operation of its Rapu Rapu Polymetallic plant in Legazpi, Albay.

The repair of a waste dump will proceed after the area has been cleaned up, said Rod Watt, Lafayette Philippines director and country manager.

Watt on Friday said that the mining firm would not resume operations until its facilities have been thoroughly checked and repaired.

"We would not want an untoward incident to happen again," Watt said in an interview. "We would await the approval of the government, through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, before we proceed with our mining activities."

According to the DENR's Environmental Management Bureau, the mine spills from Lafayette's tailings pond took place because the mining firm could not contain the rainwater that seeped through, causing the pond to overflow. Watt admitted that the company had been penalized over the incident.

But he said that the company will fully support, and comply with, the recommendations of the authorities.

Watt said Lafayette on its own contracted the services of another independent investigating team a week ago.

The team, composed of eight mining engineers and geological engineers, assessed the mining infrastructure of Rapu Rapu.

The company will spend part of of its allocated $6-million, or P336-million, budget to improve the waste dump pond, he said. Lafayette Philippines has programmed $30 million in capital expenditure.

The company's shareholders based in Australia have been concerned with the incident "but the commitment to invest continues."

The Rapu Rapu Polymetallic Project, owned by Lafayette, is one of the first mining projects to be approved by government. The plant went into commercial production early this year.

The operator of the Rapu Rapu mines shifted to metal ore production, after producing 5,000 ounces of gold, Watt said the firm hopes to resume operations in December.

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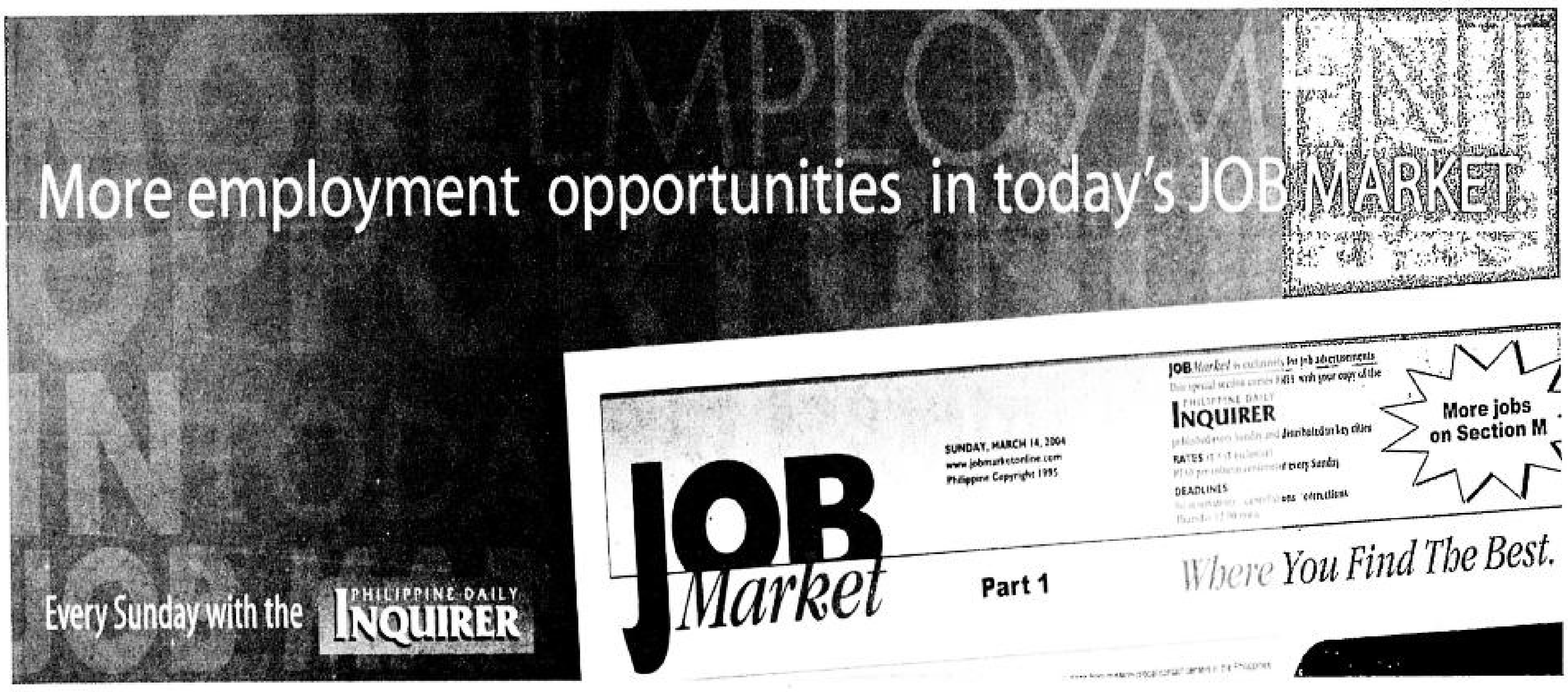
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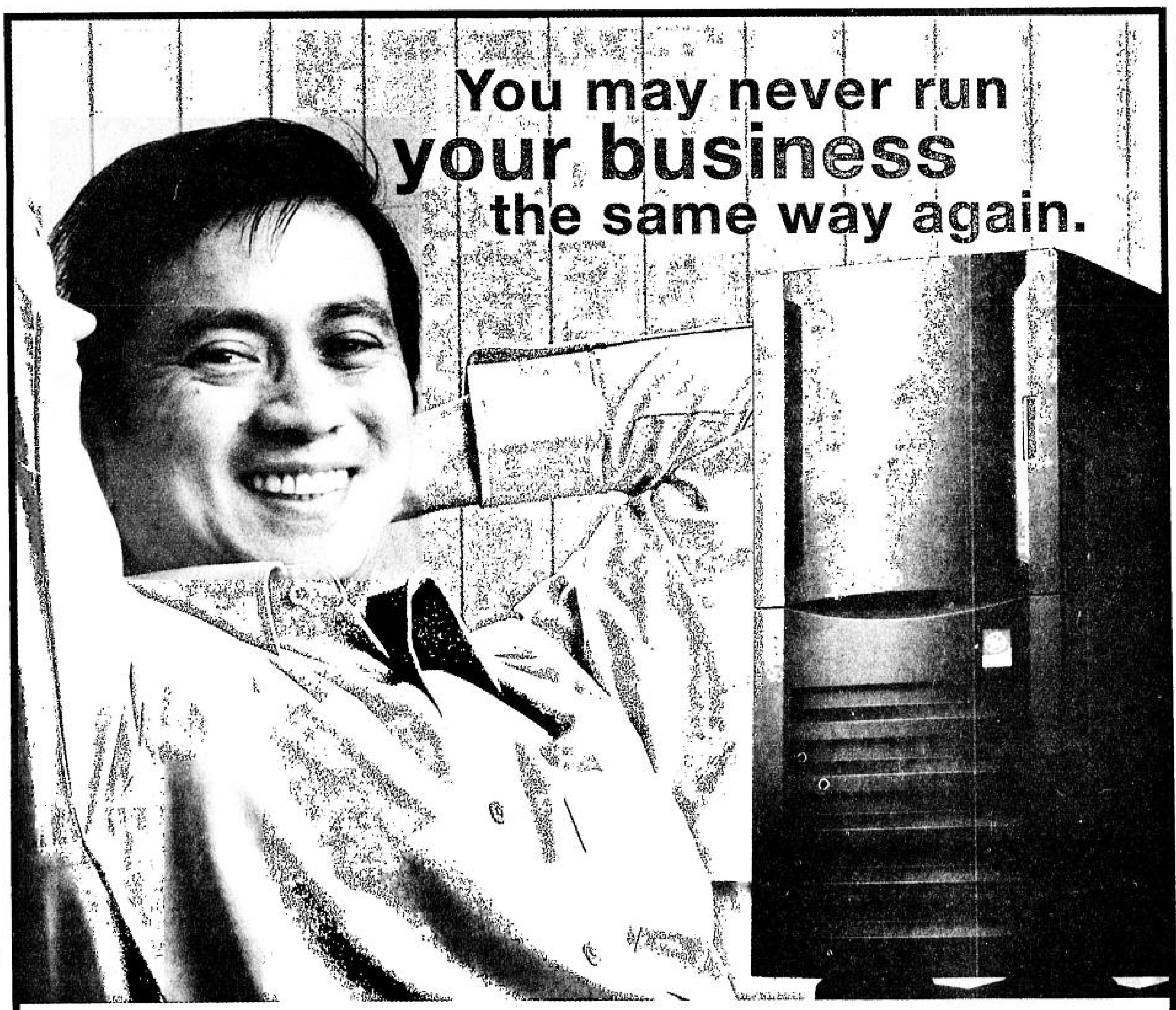

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Pulse Asia survey pure hogwash

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

PULSE ASIA'S OCTOBER 2005 Ulat ng Bayan survey released November 22 is pure, unadulterated hogwash.

The press release opens: "Pulse Asia is pleased to share with you some findings ... on Most Beneficial and Most Inimical Political Scenarios, and Best Person to lead the Philippines at Present.

"In the interest of disseminating information relating to Filipino perceptions, opinions, sentiments, and attitudes relating to current developments here and abroad, we request you to assist us in helping inform the public."

Glad to oblige. The core of the press release says:

"Majority of Filipinos favor the President's resignation. Nearly six in ten Filipinos (58 percent) express preference for different exit scenarios that would have the President resigning from public office. The overall figure is broken down as follows: 17 percent say it would be most beneficial for Filipinos if the President resigns followed by a presidential election; 12 percent favor the President's resignation and eventual replacement by Vice President Noli de Castro; 11 percent prefer the President's resignation and replacement by a temporary "junta" that would pave the way for the election of a new president or prime minister; 11 percent say Filipinos would most benefit from the resignation of both the President and Vice President, with Senate President Drilon temporarily taking over while preparations are made for special elections; and, only 8 percent consider it most beneficial if the President resigns, with Vice President de Castro taking over, while preparations are made for a new government under a new charter. Anywhere from 47 percent of those in the Visayas to 64 percent of Metro Manilans are of the opinion that the scenario most beneficial for Filipinos is for the President to resign."

Pulse Asia claims the nationwide field survey is "based on a multistage probability sample of 1,200 representative adults 18 years and above", or 300 in each of the areas of Metro Manila, rest of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. Face-to-face interviews were supposedly conducted from October 15 to 27.

Social Weather Stations used this same format in their third quarter survey. In my columns of 26 September and 17 October, I tagged the SWS survey pure hogwash.

So is this Pulse Asia survey.

How can Pulse Asia claim to have conducted a nationwide survey? Nine hundred interviews in the provinces do not even come up to one interview in each of the 1,500 municipalities (not counting 117 cities).

The validity of a survey is based on the long-held premise that you do not have to take a whole bowlful to determine how a soup tastes. A teaspoonful will do. But the Pulse Asia survey, just like the SWS survey, is not even a tiny drop of soup.

How then can Pulse Asia claim that the survey results on 1,200 respondents are the opinions of the majority of Filipinos? Even if we load the dice in favor of Pulse Asia, and assume that the adult population accounts for half of the total population, 1,200 respondents is minuscule compared to 42 million adults nationwide. That's one interview for every 35,000 adults. That is not even a tiny drop of soup.

Pulse Asia claims "nearly six in ten Filipinos (58 percent) favor the President's resignation".

How can Pulse Asia claim that the opinion of 696 (1,200 times 58 percent) Filipinos represents the opinion of the majority of the adult population?

And when you chop up the minuscule 1,200 into four layers, the results will be even more meaningless. The sum of the parts is not always equal to the whole.

Pulse Asia claims to have conducted a field survey. It seemed Pulse Asia, like SWS, conducted a table survey instead. A field survey is when you dig out your data in the heat of the noonday sun. A table survey is when you pull figures out of a hat, and shuffle them around on a table in the cool comfort of an air-conditioned room. A table survey is downright malicious.

These hogwash surveys should be stopped. Maybe the best way is for media (including cynical columnists like myself) to completely ignore them. Then, maybe, just maybe, Pulse Asia and the rest of the survey firms will go away.

P800-M . . .

From page B1

The 381,000-square-meter complex consists of four buildings linked by elevated walkways. These buildings will feature a wide array of stores and venues for dining, entertainment, leisure, arts and culture.

The main mall will include shopping and dining establishments, the food court, and the country's first Olympic-size ice skating rink. The north parking building will also house the SM Department Store and half of the 5,000 parking spaces while the south parking building will have the SM Hypermarket and more dining areas.

The mall's newest attraction is the Entertainment Plaza. Aside from bowling and billiards facilities, the building will house 10 theaters, including a Director's Club and the country's first IMAX theater.

SM Prime had said the decision to push back the schedule would not have any impact on the company's financial results for the year.

RP urged to upgrade facilities, standards for food export

Traders hope to break into untapped EU market for food products

By Ronnel W. Domingo

BUSINESS LEADERS ARE URGING THE government to upgrade food testing laboratories to complement the efforts of private firms to comply with the requirements set by European importers.

According to Joji Ilagan-Bian, chair of the Mindanao Business Council, food exporters, such as tuna producers, feel that the government needs to match the efforts of the firms in raising their capacity to meet the European Union's standards on food products.

The exporters believe that the government is not doing enough.

"Fishing firms are willing to do their share, but the government must be able to enhance the capability of the private sector," Bian said.

She explained that the companies' efforts would be futile if, for instance, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources lacked the appropriate facilities, like laboratories and ports, that would ensure the quality of export products.

Examples of such market requirements are the good manufacturing practice (GMP) and hazard analysis critical control point (HACCP), which the United States and the EU started implementing on fruit juices and seafood two years ago.

GMP refers to the sanitary facilities and operations of a food factory, while HACCP is related to the safeness of a food product.

Exporters need to be GMP- and HACCP-accredited before their products can enter the US and EU markets.

Gov't takes steps to sell PSTC

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT is preparing for the sale of PNOC Shipping and Transport Corp. (PSTC).

PSTC has been placed on the privatization list, along with other assets in the power sector as part of the government's power reform agenda.

Already, the government is searching for a financial adviser that will facilitate the the design, planning, preparation and implementation of the privatization of PSTC.

PSTC, established in 1979, is engaged in the business of shipping, tankering, lighterage, barging, towing and transport/shipment of goods, chattels, petroleum and other products, as well as marine products.

It is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Philippine National Oil Co.

Target date

The privatization committee of the PSTC hopes that by Dec. 12, they will have gathered applications to pre-qualify in the bidding from interested investors.

The government has embarked on an aggressive privatization effort of state assets, along with power assets, to increase revenue collection and place its fiscal house in order.

The Department of Finance, one of the lead agencies administering privatization efforts, had said that proceeds from the privatization of government assets would be used partly to finance infrastructure and developmental projects.

The government has set a target of generating P1 billion by 2006 through the sale of state assets, on top of expected revenues from the privatization of assets in the power sector.

Budget woes

The national government's lingering budget woes has precluded it from funding vital infrastructure projects and providing basic services.

Currently, about a third of the national government's budget goes to interest payments.

Only less than 10 percent goes to capital outlay.

This year, the national government likewise set a target of generating P1 billion from privatization.

Already, the government has exceeded its target following the sale of its shares in Philippine National Bank to the Lucio Tan group.

NTC sets frequency band for remote control gadgets

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS Commission last week issued a circular setting a standard frequency band for all remote control gadgets, including meter readers used by the Manila Electric Co.

The commission acted on the request of the Singapore government to have a unified 900 band for all remote control devices to ease production and facilitate after-sales services.

The NTC has already allocated the 900 band for the exclusive use of remote control devices in the country.

Singapore coursed its request through the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

At first, the government had some reservations "when Singapore first brought up the matter before the Asean," said NTC chair Ronald Solis.

But when the Commission conducted an inventory of the bands it had awarded, it saw that the 900 band was still free.

"So we issued a circular on telemetry to allocate the band, in line with the proposal of Singapore," Solis said in an interview.

Remote control devices, like those used on toys and meter readers, particularly those of Meralco and water utilities, operate under a certain frequency.

The NTC is the agency tasked to manage and allocate all radio frequencies within the country's airspace.

Growrich maintains integrity of virgin coco oil in capsules

THE MAKER OF A BREAKthrough food supplement—virgin coconut oil (VCO) in capsule form—is still the only company that has met the strict standards of the Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) in developing and producing the capsules.

Growrich Food Manufacturing Inc., which produces virgin coconut oil products in 500 mg capsules, said that at present, no other company holds a BFAD registration for manufacturing the product.

Growrich said that its capsules would not have been issued a BFAD certificate of public registration if their manufacturing process had been defective.

Recently, the release of a flavored version of VCO pills in the market prompted the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Product Standards (BAFPS) to investigate and order the pullout of the company's commercials aired on television.

The government agency said there were questions on the health benefits of the flavored VCO product.

According to Dr. Ed Lalusis of Growrich, the firm came up with the idea of putting VCO into capsules to help consumers who have complained of difficulty in ingesting it.

Lalusis said Growrich's process also bolstered the VCO's integrity because it is protected from the elements. The products come in blister packs.

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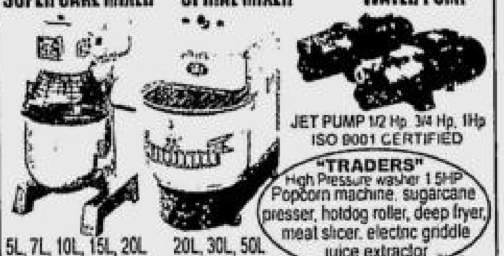
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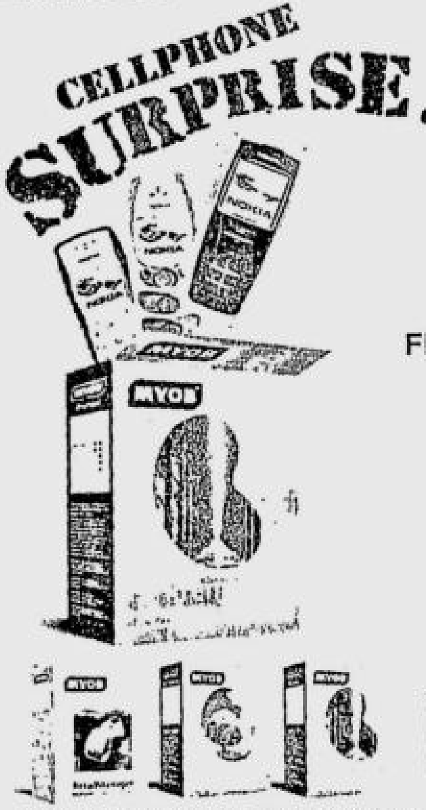
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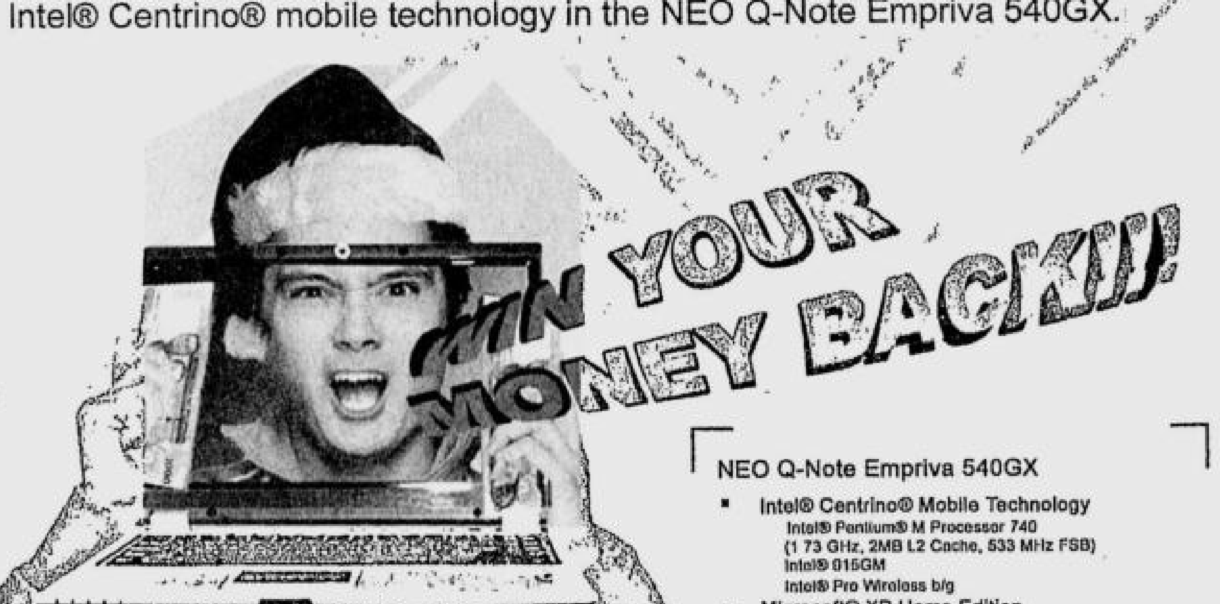
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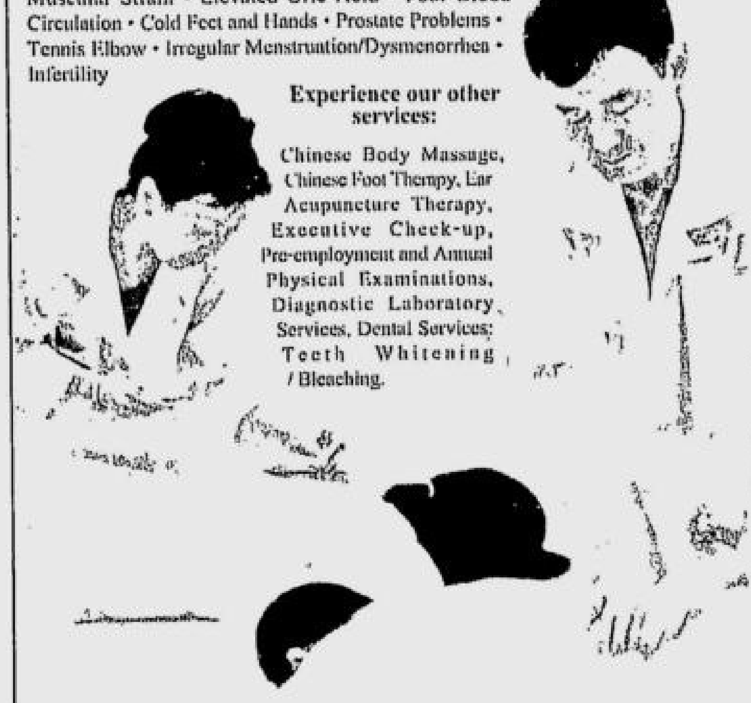
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Editor **Leo Magno**

Smart makes first 3G call in Cebu

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

PHILIIPINE CELLULAR SERVICE operator Smart Communications has conducted its own third-generation (3G) mobile network test in Cebu, making the operator the second local operator to jump into live tests of 3G.

Rival Globe Telecom publicly demonstrated its 3G service during an advertising congress two weeks ago.

Smart, a wireless subsidiary of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., made its first public demonstration of its 3G network with the local press.

Smart's test of the 3G network was made between the operator and roaming partner Telecom Italia Mobile.

Smart has been saying that the Philippine market is not ready for 3G.

It has, however, been one of the local companies applying for a government license to operate a 3G network in the Philippines.

Smart revealed that it has started conducting tests with 3G five years ago.

Smart with Nokia, with then National Telecommunications Commission deputy commissioner Nestor Dacanay as witness, conducted the first 3G trial in the Philippines in December 2000, according to Rolando Pena, Smart head for network services division.

The Smart 3G test demonstrated a video conferencing application that runs on a 3G network using the wideband code division multiple access (WCDMA) standard. This standard provides around 216.9 kbps bandwidth, according to Smart.

Smart also demonstrated the 3G roaming capability of its 3G network here in Mactan, Cebu.

3G promises to bring a richer, multimedia experience to mobile phone users. It provides data rates ranging from 384kbps to 2Mbps, a big leap from GSM data rate of 9.6kbps.

Smart also demonstrated its 3G test network in the Inter-working Roaming Expert Group conference here in Mactan Island in Cebu.

Smart said it has acquired a trial permit and frequencies from the NTC for the public demonstration of its 3G network.

MOBILE TV using a Nokia 7110

Mobile TV and reality

By Leo Magno

(Last of two parts)

IN THE PHILIPPINES WHERE THE FINAL rules for 3G frequency allocation took almost two years to be released, regulatory provisions for new technologies may take some time, especially when we discuss something like mobile TV or DVB-H (Digital Video Broadcasting-Handheld).

Mobile TV broadcasting allows users to watch TV shows on their mobile device. The service works by receiving a specialized digital TV broadcast signal from the air in much the same way as televisions do. It is not the same as a streaming video service over 3G or GPRS, but one which is optimized for long periods of TV viewing by large numbers of simultaneous users with high picture quality and low battery consumption. Transmissions are made directly from specialized television masts rather than cell sites used for mobile telephony.

National Telecommunications Commission deputy commissioner Jorge Sarmiento said Nokia has already given them a presentation on mobile TV and that they are still looking into whether it should be placed under regulatory rules of broadcast or telecom.

"We have not discussed it yet, maybe you can give us some ideas," Sarmiento said in a text message.

Telcos and TV stations

On the operators' side, Smart Communications and Globe Telecom generally preferred to be tight-lipped about mobile TV while it is still in the test phase.

"These services aren't for everyone but for sure we'll make any service available if there is enough demand," said Jones Campos, public affairs head of Globe. "We could do mobile TV once we get an NTC license. We may also have to coordinate with content providers, in this case, the TV networks. But until then, we'll still test basic video calls and video streaming."

Globe is reportedly planning to offer a video phone service over 3G next year.

Meanwhile, a Smart official said that "he does not know at this time" when asked about ongoing talks with potential partners for mobile TV.

Even broadcasters are tight-lipped about mobile TV.

"We're talking to everyone," said Judd Gallares, president and COO of GMA New Media when asked if Nokia has talked to them about mobile TV.

No representatives from ABS-CBN were available for comment as of press time.

Economics and regulations

So will we see the Philippines lining up to become the next country to offer mobile TV after Malaysia and Italy?

The twin troubles of economics and regulations may hamper such a possibility. Even 3G hit a dead spot even though the NTC has issued final rules on 3G frequency application bidding. Smart, for one, said 3G is not yet commercially feasible.

"I still maintain that the Philippine market is not yet ready for 3G," said Rogelio Quevedo, Smart Communications head for legal and external carrier relations, in an earlier interview. "It is the suppliers who are pushing 3G."

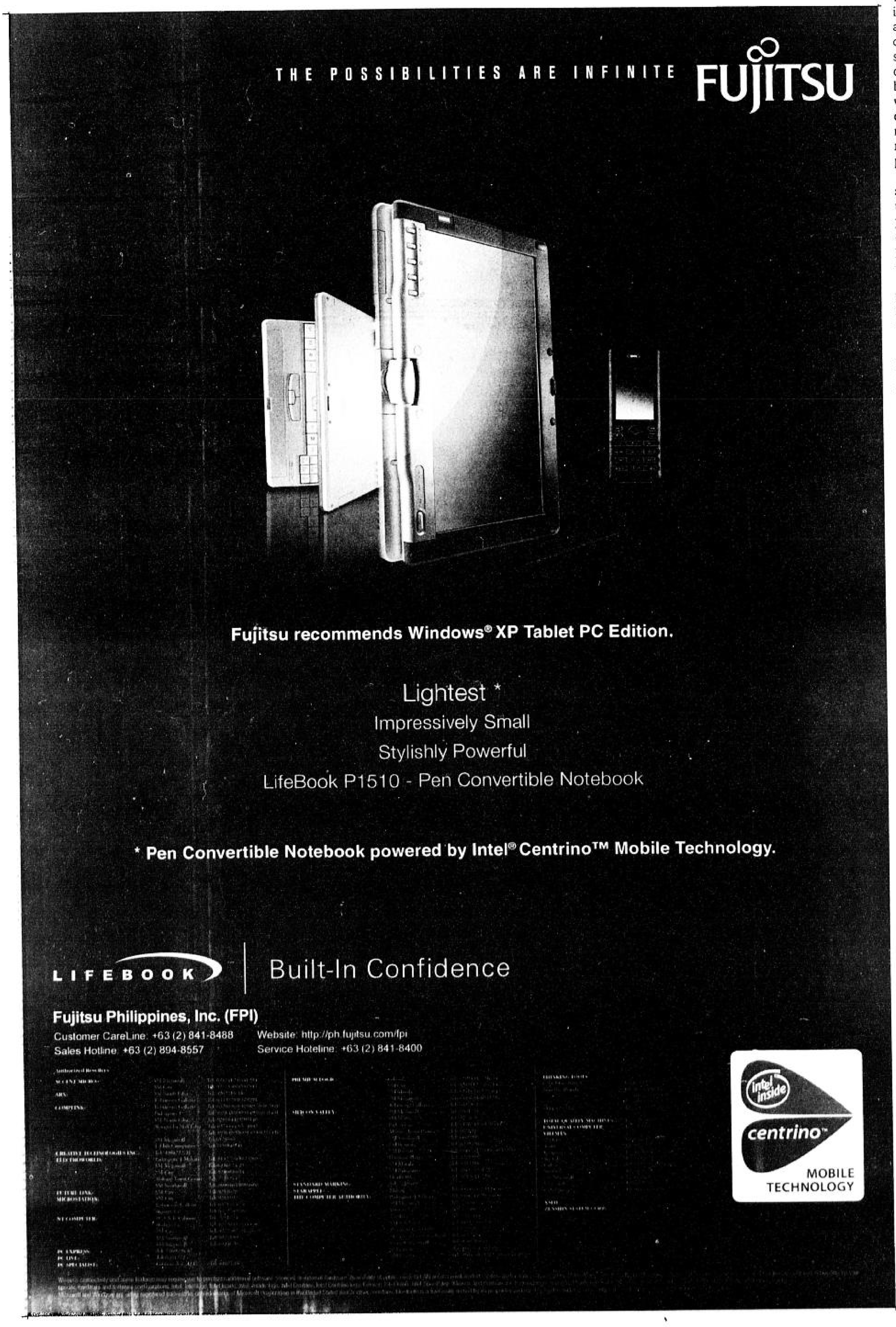
Quevedo insisted that operators are going to bankrupt themselves if they decide to deploy 3G at this time.

The same may happen to mobile TV, even though this technology is totally independent of 3G. Once economies of scale are not reached, operators may back out. Or the NTC may foot-drag anew regarding broadcast and telco regulations impacting mobile TV. Or the different players—operators, system integrators, broadcasters, content aggregators and TV program license holders—may squabble over customer ownership and revenue sharing.

And so will we see and hear Mike Enriquez on Nokia N92 mobile TV phones over the Smart network next year? Unlikely.

But please, please...prove me wrong.

With reports from Erwin Oliva and Alex Villafania



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MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

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(As of November 25, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.7	3.9	3.7	3.9	2,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	34.5	34.5	34	34.5	401,600
Bank of the Phil. Islands	59	59	58.5	58.5	693,600
China Banking Corp.	610	610	610	610	350
Citystate Savings Bank	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	600
Export And Ind. Bank Inc.	0.63	0.64	0.63	0.64	600,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	55	55	54.5	55	224,300
International Exch. Bank	21.25	21.25	21.25	21.25	5,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	32	32	31	31.5	1,877,900
Philippine National Bank	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	5,100
Phil. Savings Bank	34	34	34	34	100
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	18,000
Security Bank Corp.	35	35	34	34	104,100
Union Bank of the Phil.	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	3,500
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	3100	3110	3100	3100	1,010
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2110	2170	2110	2170	3,980
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	54,300
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.93	0.93	0.92	0.93	1,770,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	770	785	770	785	145,080
Ipeople Inc.	3.2	3.55	3.2	3.4	883,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0525	0.0525	0.049	0.05	5,300,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.048	0.049	0.048	0.049	900,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.35	3.35	3.3	3.3	546,000
Transpacific Broadband	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	20,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1740	1740	1730	1735	64,400
Ivantage Corp.	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	500,000
Philweb Corp.	0.016	0.017	0.016	0.017	256,200,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	14.75	14.75	14.25	14.25	171,300
Manila Electric Co. B	23.25	23.25	23	23	292,100
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.6	6.6	6.5	6.5	49,000
Petron Corp.	4.35	4.35	4.25	4.25	2,333,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.96	50,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.86	1.86	1.86	1.86	144,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.66	1.66	1.66	1.66	2,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	9.5	9.7	9.5	9.6	192,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.69	0.69	0.68	0.68	2,040,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	130,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.65	3.8	3.65	3.8	6,196,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	6,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.55	3.55	3.55	3.55	44,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	2,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	26	26	26	26	17,500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	40	40	39.5	39.5	123,400
Pancake House Inc.	3.6	3.9	3.6	3.85	8,869,000
RFM Corp.	0.71	0.74	0.69	0.74	400,000
San Miguel Corp. A	64	64.5	63.5	64.5	102,500
San Miguel Corp. B	88.5	89.5	88.5	88.5	69,300
Universal Robina Corp.	17.75	17.75	17.75	17.75	16,100
Vitarich Corp.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.31	320,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	20,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	2,000,000
Ayala Corp.	345	345	337.5	340	101,450
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.9	4.9	4.85	4.9	875,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	4,500,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	20,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	69,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.82	0.86	0.82	0.84	2,480,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.56	1.56	1.56	1.56	20,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9.4	9.5	9.4	9.5	55,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.155	0.16	0.155	0.16	750,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	4,066,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.91	1	0.9	0.99	1,260,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	100,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	30,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.28	8,100,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.15	3.2	1,218,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	2,000,000
F&J Prince Holdings Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	10,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	50	50.5	49.5	50.5	540,400
House Of Investments Inc.	0.9	0.95	0.9	0.95	700,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.7	3.7	3.65	3.7	1,618,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	35,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.3	1.32	1.3	1.32	517,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	1,160,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.37	0.37	0.36	0.36	4,940,000
Paxys Inc.	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.3	1,102,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	100,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.3	1.32	1.3	1.32	733,000
SM Investments Corp.	248	248	246	248	120,950
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.25	3.3	3.25	3.3	6,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	10,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	500,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	25,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	220,000
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp.	7	7	7	7	5,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.08	1.08	3,963,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.5	1.5	316,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.33	0.35	0.33	0.34	3,200,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	845,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	100
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8	38,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	9.8	9.8	9.6	9.7	4,814,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	30,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.08	1.08	1,154,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	3,070,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.225	0.23	0.225	0.225	900,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	6,590,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.38	1.38	1.36	1.36	2,748,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.5	0.51	0.5	0.51	240,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.13	0.135	0.13	0.13	970,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	6.1	6.1	6	6.1	793,000
SM Development Corp.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	50,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.8	8.8	8.7	8.7	2,962,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	11,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	6.2	6.3	6.1	6.3	1,132,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.52	1.52	1.52	1.52	90,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.23	0.23	0.22	0.225	2,790,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.26	0.26	0.245	0.25	18,650,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	253,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.029	0.029	0.028	0.029	158,200,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	80,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.26	1.26	1.24	1.24	3,114,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.54	1.54	1.48	1.5	3,922,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	26.5	26.5	26	26.5	1,336,700
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.26	570,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	1,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	49,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	47,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	10,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	3.8	4.1	3.8	4	589,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.145	0.15	0.14	0.14	9,700,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.37	910,000

CURRENCIES

November 25, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.848248	1.000000	54.2390
Japan	Yen	0.007134	0.008410	0.4561
United Kingdom	Pound	1.461617	1.723100	93.4592
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.109419	0.128994	6.9965
Switzerland	Franc	0.644713	0.760052	41.2245
Canada	Dollar	0.724009	0.853534	46.2948
Singapore	Dollar	0.501863	0.591646	32.0903
Australia	Dollar	0.626013	0.738007	40.0288
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.250533	2.653153	143.9044
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.226194	0.266660	14.4634
Brunei	Dollar	0.500383	0.589901	31.9956
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000100	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.020623	0.024313	1.3187
UAE	Dirham	0.230947	0.272264	14.7673
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.178900	63.9424
Argentina	Peso	0.288275	0.339847	18.4330
Brazil	Real	0.379920	0.447888	24.2930
Denmark	Kroner	0.134083	0.158070	8.5736
India	Rupee	0.018569	0.021891	1.1873
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.224553	0.264725	14.3584
Mexico	New Peso	0.079957	0.094261	5.1126
New Zealand	Dollar	0.588000	0.693193	37.5981
South Africa	Rand	0.129660	0.152856	8.2908
Korea	Won	0.000819	0.000966	0.0524
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025370	0.029909	1.6222

PDEx GS BENCHMARKS

Friday, Nov. 25, 2005
Philippine Dealing & Exchange Corp. (PDEx)
(as of 4:30 p.m.)

Tenor	Today	Change from previous day	Change from previous week	Change from previous month
1M	6.0000	0.05	(0.18)	(0.35)
3M	6.0000	0.05	(0.20)	(0.35)
6M	7.5500	(0.05)	(0.33)	(0.58)
1Y	7.8750	(0.57)	(1.05)	(1.13)
2Y	9.5000	(0.07)	(0.13)	(0.35)
3Y	9.8000	0.00	(0.23)	(0.33)
4Y	10.0000	0.00	(0.15)	(0.48)
5Y	9.8572	(0.04)	(0.54)	(0.84)
7Y	10.2500	(0.13)	(0.25)	(0.94)
10Y	11.0000	0.00	(0.20)	(0.75)
20Y	11.6250	0.00	0.00	(0.48)
25Y	12.0000	0.00	(0.32)	(0.50)

PDEx TRADING VOLUME

Instrument	Weekly Total Volume (in million PHP)
FXTNs	20,734.4
TBILLs	513.0
RTBs	740.5
TOTAL	21,987.9

NOTE: PDEx Benchmarks are calculated from the weighted average yields of done transactions, best midrates, or best firm bid rates as the case maybe for 12 tenors at 4 p.m. daily. The PDEx Benchmarks may be used to compare interest rate bases for loans, deposits and other financial instruments that have variable rates.

Firm to spend ₱20B on 3G

By Clarissa S. Batino

NEXT MOBILE INC., a trunked radio operator affiliated with Cashrounds Inc., is allotting P20 billion for the five-year rollout and operation of its planned third-generation or 3G wireless network.

Documents submitted to the National Telecommunications Commission showed that the company controlled by Gamboa Holdings Inc. would borrow P6.37 billion in the first three years of operation.

At the same time, it plans to secure about P3 billion in suppliers' credit over five years.

About P7.7 billion of expected revenue from operations starting the third year would be plowed back into operations, according to Next Mobile.

The NTC said it would award five licenses to operate a 3G network next year.

The 3G wireless network allows faster transmission of data, making it possible to send videos and large packets of data using the mobile phone.

IECEP MEETING THE GLOBAL CHALLENGE
DEC 01, 2005 (THURSDAY)
M/S PHILIPPINES
MANILA HOTEL

The 55th Annual IECEP CONVENTION
DEC 1, 2005
MANILA HOTEL

7:30 – 8:30 am Registration/Breakfast with PRC & BECE
8:30 – 9:00 Opening Ceremonies
Invocation
National Anthem
Welcome Address
Introduction of the Guest Speaker
Hon. Avelina A. De La Rea
Commissioner, PRC
9:00 – 10:00 "Let's 3G with ZTE"
Loren Xiao, Tech Mgr for 3G Technologies, ZTE
10:00 – 11:00 "APC's Infrastruxure: The On-Demand Data Center Architecture"
Norberto Avila Jr., Product Manager, APC ISX
11:00 – 12:00 "NERA Corporate Presentation" & "Digital TV Broadcasting"
Engr. Nimfa T. Mariano, SVP/Country Manager, NERA, Philippines
Joseph M. Rebolledo, Sr Business Segment Mgr for TMN, NERA, Philippines
12:00 – 1:30 Luncheon Seminar with PLDT
1:30 – 2:15 "LCD Technology"
Russer Cabrera, Product Manager, EPSON Multimedia Projectors
2:15 – 3:15 "Third Generation Mobile Communications"
Mr. Leo Adriano, Product Manager, Ericsson
3:30 – 4:00 BREAK
4:00 – 5:00 Updates on Telecommunications Regulations
Engr. Edgardo V. Cabarios
President, IECEP
Director, Common Carrier Authorization Department, NTC
5:00 – 6:00 Presentation of Nominees for the Election of IECEP Directors
Engr. Fernando C. Morales, Chairman on Elections
6:00 – 11:00 Annual General Meeting and IECEP Night

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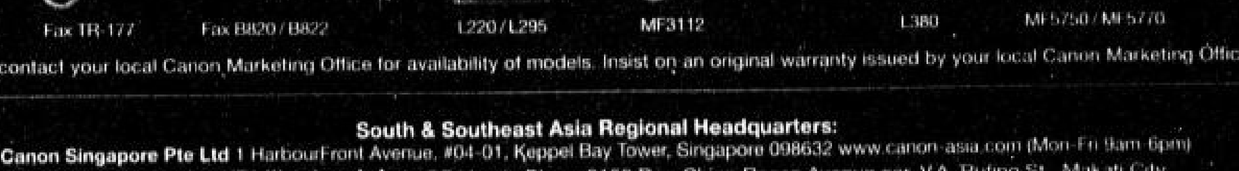

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PHILIPPINE ACADEMY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY
60 Years 1945-2005

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY
The Eye M.D. Association

2005 Joint Meeting in Manila

Where Asia Meets America

November 28 to December 1, 2005
Edsa Shangri-la, Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila, Philippines

Mabuhay!

The Department of Health joins the officers and members of the Academy of Ophthalmology as they mark the Diamond Anniversary of Organized Ophthalmology in the Philippines.

It is an honor to be part of this historic occasion which will be attended by various medical professionals and specialists here and abroad as they participate and share experiences and new knowledge that will further expand their professional growth and create positive measures in improving our health care services for the benefits of our countrymen.

I commend your academy for its continuing mission of providing quality health care services and promoting quality public health programs that are essential in preserving the health and welfare of all.

May this event provide the necessary venue to nurture high standards in health service and instill health consciousness to everyone.

Hon. Francisco T. Duque, III, MD, MSc
Secretary, Department of Health

Warmest greetings from the Philippine Medical Association (PMA).

In behalf of the Officers and Board of Governors of the PMA, allow me to congratulate the Philippine Academy of Ophthalmology on the historical joint meeting with the American Academy of Ophthalmology. This event in itself is an unprecedented milestone occurring on the Diamond Anniversary of organized ophthalmology.

The practice of ophthalmology in the country has gone a long way. PAO has certainly contributed to this accomplishment. The continued supply of Philippine- trained world class ophthalmologists is the single most important contribution of PAO. PMA is indeed proud of you.

PMA joins you on this occasion and wishes that you have a very productive and successful meeting.

Modesto O. Llamas, MD
President, Philippine Medical Association

Mabuhay!

After almost two years of endless preparations, we have gathered for this historic Joint Annual Meeting of the Philippine Academy of Ophthalmology and the American Academy of Ophthalmology, which serves as the culminating activity for our year-long 60th Anniversary commemoration.

We can say with much pride and honor that, indeed, the PAO has come of age and is now ready to take up new challenges in the stage of world ophthalmology!

Our meeting, as well as our theme, "Where Asia Meets America," are an affirmation of an increasing globalized world, where countries and peoples transcend their boundaries, become interconnected with and increasingly dependent on each other for survival. Now is as good a time as any for us, ophthalmologists, to think in terms of greater partnership and collaboration as we look to the future and see beyond the horizon of international ophthalmology. Thus, we have established partnerships and raised the levels of communication and interaction with other organizations.

On behalf of the Philippine Academy of Ophthalmology, I would like to thank the American Academy of Ophthalmology and all our international guests and faculty for joining us in our 60th anniversary celebration. You have made our meeting more memorable and meaningful by way of your active participation and a tribute to the academic excellence of the Filipino Eye MD.

Mabuhay ang PAO!
Mabuhay ang Pilipinas!

Marcelino D. Banzon, MD
President, Philippine Academy of Ophthalmology

On behalf of the Organizing Committee for the 2005 Joint PAO-AAO Meeting in Manila, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of the delegates to this culminating activity for the 60th Anniversary of organized ophthalmology in the Philippines.

For the last two years, the members of the organizing committee have labored long and hard in order to bring together a meeting befitting a diamond year celebration. We wanted each and every attendee to emerge from this meeting enriched, not just in terms of knowledge, but also in the sense of satisfaction and pride in the privileged work that we do to preserve and restore sight. Hence we have prepared a scientific program that will be relevant to all students of ophthalmology, be they beginning residents, seasoned practitioners, or allied medical health professionals.

I am extremely grateful to the members of the organizing committee for their selfless dedication, without which this meeting would not be possible. Our Academy is especially appreciative of the leaders and officers of the American Academy of Ophthalmology for accepting our invitation to hold this first joint meeting in this part of the world, and for the exceptional cooperation and assistance they extended to us throughout the many months of preparation. Special mention also goes to our many industry partners whose unwavering support despite the difficult economic times gave us the confidence to push through with this rather daunting task.

For all our differences in culture we all share a common and continuing quest for knowledge and excellence in our noble field, all for the purpose of improving the lives we touch through the gift of sight. May the exchange of ideas during this meeting broaden our minds and further our vision so that we may emerge truly enriched by our diversity.

Mabuhay!

Ma. Dominga B. Padilla, MD
Organizing Committee Chair
2005 Joint PAO-AAO Meeting in Manila

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY
The Eye M.D. Association

It is with great pleasure that the American of Ophthalmology congratulates the Philippine Academy of Ophthalmology on the occasion of its 60th anniversary of organized ophthalmology in the Philippines.

We are honored to take part in this Joint Meeting of the PAO and AAO. On behalf of the Academy's Board of Trustees, I extend our greetings and best wishes to our colleagues in the Philippines, the Pacific rim, and around the world. This promises to be an excellent educational meeting.

H. Dunbar Hoskins, Jr., MD
Executive Vice President, American Academy of Ophthalmology

On Behalf of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, I would like to extend congratulations to the organizing committee on their outstanding scientific program.

This program offers up-to-date and cutting edge information presented by well-respected experts on multiple topics of clinical importance to practitioners. It is my pleasure to be part of this most educational event and know it will be a rewarding experience for all attendees from both scientific and cultural perspectives.

Richard L. Abbott, MD
Secretary for Quality Care and Ophthalmic Knowledge Base
American Academy of Ophthalmology

"A Fitting End, an Auspicious Beginning"

After two hectic years of preparation, the First Joint Meeting of the Philippine Academy of Ophthalmology (PAO) and the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) in Manila is finally here. It promises to be a fitting culmination to a year which celebrates 60 years of organized Ophthalmology in the Philippines; 60 years of "opening eyes and uplifting lives" through this special science and exacting art which preserves vision and restores sight.

Throughout this diamond year, the PAO, through its members and chapters, has undertaken a number of activities, most of which were aimed at public information and education through tri-media campaigns. Another major undertaking was the Academy's commitment to achieve 60,000 cataract surgeries nationwide by year's end. Not to be outdone of course is the continuous quest for academic excellence, a duty of all PAO members so that they may better serve the Filipino people. And nothing can better embody this quest than this Joint Meeting.

More than just being a historical first for both the PAO and the AAO, this event has brought together an unprecedented number of top rate faculty members as participants in a meeting of a caliber that rarely comes around anywhere in the world. We are indeed fortunate to have 54 stellar international faculty members from 13 nations join 46 distinguished local faculty members, all of whom were carefully chosen so that pearls of knowledge would flow aplenty. The only drawback to such a rich program is that attendees will find it difficult to decide which sessions to attend and which to give up.

This meeting was an ambitious undertaking that could not have materialized without the dedication of the members of the organizing committee, the valuable assistance of the AAO, and the unwavering support of industry partners of both the PAO and the AAO. Those who have labored hard for this day hope all will go well so that this meeting might be the worthy culmination of a diamond year, and an auspicious start to the next 60 years of Philippine Ophthalmology.

To all members of the PAO, ***"A happy diamond anniversary to all!"*** May Filipino Eye MD's continue to grow as persons and healers as they make their mark in the Philippines and in the global community. To all international delegates, a heartfelt "welcome" and "thank you" for your presence and support. May this be a meeting all participants can look back to as time well spent and worth remembering.

Program Highlights

- Stepwise Approach to Glaucoma Management
- Optic Nerve Imaging and Analysis
- Corneal Transplantation and Eye Banking
- Dry Eye and Ocular Surface Disease
- Treatment of Ocular Infection and Trauma
- New Cataract Surgery Techniques
- Phacoemulsification Complications: Prevention and Management
- Refractive Surgery in Children, Presbyopia and Extremely High Myopia
- Botulinum Toxin A Applications
- Oriental Blepharoplasty Techniques
- Cutting Edge Neuro-ophthalmologic Diagnostic Techniques
- Toxic, Autoimmune and Other Optic Neuropathies
- New Diagnostic Tools and Treatment Options for Uveitis
- Low Vision Rehabilitation and Low-cost Vision Aids
- Evidence-based Clinical Decision-making and Health Policies
- Ophthalmology in Public Health
- Retinoblastoma and other Tumors of the Eye and Ocular Adnexa
- Retinopathy of Prematurity
- Anti-angiogenic Agents in Vitreoretinal Disease
- Management of Choroidal Neovascular Membranes

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As the National Organization of Eye Doctors, the PAO is the umbrella organization for its Subspecialty Societies:

- Cornea Club of the Philippines
  Dr. Victor Jose L. Caparas
- Neuro- Ophthalmology Club
  Dr. Raul D. Cruz
- Philippine Ocular Inflammation Society
  Dr. Romeo V. Fajardo
- Philippine Glaucoma Society
  Dr. Patricia M. Khu
- Philippine Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery
  Dr. Benjamin Gerardo G. Cabrera
- Philippine Society of Ophthalmic Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery
  Dr. Franklin P. Kleiner
- Philippine Society of Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus
  Dr. Emilio L. Macias III
- Vitreo- Retina Society of the Philippines
  Dr. Pearl M. Tamesis-Villalon

With more than 1,000 members spread across the archipelago, the PAO has strategically located regional Chapter Societies headed by their respective presidents

BICOL CHAPTER
Dr. Rollo C. Milante

CEBU SOCIETY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY
Dr. Mario Dennis E. Amparado

CENTRAL LUZON SOCIETY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY
Dr. Raoul Paolo D. Henson

EASTERN VISAYAS SOCIETY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY
Dr. Jossie C. Baltonado

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Dr. Carlo Antonio P. Romero

NORTHWESTERN LUZON CHAPTER
Dr. Benedict B. Bernal

SOUTHERN MINDANAO SOCIETY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY
Dr. Maximino S. Libre

SOUTHERN TAGALOG SOCIETY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY
Dr. Dante Mark D. Udasco

WESTERN VISAYAS ACADEMY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY
Dr. Eusebio Jose I. Eusebio

CAGAYAN VALLEY CHAPTER
Dr. Eduardo R. Martin

For more information about the **Philippine Academy of Ophthalmology**, contact the PAO Secretariat located at Unit 815, 8th Floor, Medical Plaza Makati, Amorsolo cor. Dela Rosa Streets, Legaspi Village, Makati City, 1200;
Telephone numbers (632) 813-5324 / 813-5318; www.pao.org.ph.

For meeting details, please contact the **Philippine Congress Organizing Center** (PCOC) located at 2nd floor, Physicians' Tower, 533 United Nations Avenue, Ermita, Manila, 1000; Telephone numbers (632) 521- 4884/ 526- 8105.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
ILOILO STATE COLLEGE OF FISHERIES
Barotac, Nuevo, Iloilo 5007
Tel. / Fax No. (033) 3612413

THE SEARCH COMMITTEE OF THE
ILOILO STATE COLLEGE FISHERIES (ISCOF)

Announces the opening of the

SEARCH FOR ISCOF PRESIDENT

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE PRESIDENCY OF THE ILOILO STATE COLLEGE OF FISHERIES (ISCOF)

1. Filipino citizen;
2. Preferably a B.S. Fishery graduate with an earned doctorate degree;
3. Preferably not more than 60 years old at the time of application;
4. Must have at least five (5) years of relevant managerial and administrative experience; and
5. Has not been convicted by final judgment of any crime.

In addition, the applicants/nominees are required to make full disclosure under oath of all administrative, criminal and civil cases.

Interested applicants for the position are requested to submit six (6) sets of formal application composed of:

1. Detailed Curriculum Vitae with supporting documents duly certified to include administrative/managerial experiences and competence, academic preparation, research background, awards received, and community/extension services; provided, that these documents must be accompanied by a sworn statement as to the correctness and validity thereof;
2. The applicant's proposed Vision, Mission and Thrust for the Iloilo State College of Fisheries;
3. Neuro-Psychiatric Exam to be accompanied by a duly accredited health institution; and
4. Medical Certificate accomplished by a government physician.

Send application, together with supporting documents, to Mrs. Melahi V. Baylas, Board Secretary V and Head of Secretariat of the Search Committee, Iloilo State College of Fisheries, Barotac Nuevo, Iloilo with Tel. No. (033) 3612-413 or to Com. Hadja Luningning M. Umar, CHED Commissioner and Presiding Chairman, ISCOF Board of Trustees, CHED Central Office, 5th Floor, DAP Building, Ortigas Center, Pasig City not later than **January 6, 2006**.

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE
MUNICIPALITY OF MANUKAN
OFFICE OF THE BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Municipal Hall, Manukan

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID FOR THE PLANNING, DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE MANUKAN PUBLIC MARKET, MANUKAN, ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE

The Municipality of Manukan, Zamboanga del Norte has approved the Proposed Construction of Manukan Public Market in the amount of P25M, thru planning, design and construction scheme located at Manukan, Zamboanga del Norte. All interested proponents with the following qualifications are invited to prequalify and submit proposals for the planning, design and construction of the said project.

1. PCAB/IAC CATEGORY Medium for Buildings and Industrial plants
2. Must be capable of undertaking the planning, design and construction of Public Market
3. With existing Business Permit within Zamboanga del Norte

The Schedule of BAC activities is as follows

BAC Activities	Deadline
1. Letter of Intent	December 13, 2005
2. Issuance of Eligibility Form	December 13, 2005
3. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	December 13, 2005 (5:00 PM)
4. Issuance of TOR/BID Documents	December 15, 2005
5. Pre-Bid Conference	December 23, 2005 (3:00 PM)
6. Receipt and Opening of Bids	January 2, 2006 (10:00 AM)

All interested proponents are hereby advised to submit Letter of Intent upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P2,000.00 to the Cashier of Municipality of Manukan, Zamboanga del Norte to obtain Eligibility Forms.

The BAC will issue Terms of Reference or bidding documents only to Bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of non-refundable amount of P7,500.00 to the Cashier of Municipality of Manukan ZN.

Letter of Intent shall be addressed to the Chairman, Office of the BAC, Manukan, Zamboanga del Norte.

The Manukan LGU reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive any informality or defects therein and accept the offer most advantageous and acceptable design to the Manukan LGU.

(Sgd.) **ROSARIO E. REDERA**
BAC Chairman

(PDI - Nov. 23 & 28, 2005)

MAYNILAD WATER SERVICES, INC.
Basement, MWSI Bldg., MWSS Complex
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City, Philippines 1100
Tel. Nos. 435-33-66, 920-5521 loc. 3600, 3615, 3616

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND BID

The Maynilad Water Services, Inc. intends to pre-qualify interested applicants for the e-bidding of the following sizes of **District Meters.**

Particulars	
Sizes	Quantity
1. 100 mm	19 pieces
2. 150 mm	82 pieces
3. 200 mm	1 piece
4. 250 mm	11 pieces
5. 300 mm	15 pieces
As per MWSI Technical Specifications (Section 32100) & E-Bid Terms and Conditions.	

Interested Bidders may, beginning December 01 until December 07, 2005, obtain further information and secure a complete set of pre-qualification forms, technical specifications and Terms and Conditions (Bid Documents) upon payment of a non-refundable document fee in the amount of P1,500.00, payable to MWSI, at the following address:

PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
MAYNILAD WATER SERVICES, INC.
Basement, MWSI Office, MWSS Cmpd.
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City

For more information, please contact the Purchasing Department at Telephone Nos. 435-3366 and 435-3374.

(Sgd.) **LUIS Z. LERMA**
Manager, Purchasing Dept.

(PDI - Nov 27 & 28, 2005)

NFA Antique intensifies rice fortification campaign

THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY IN SAN JOSE, ANTIQUE recently conducted a series of orientation on rice fortification among its employees, members and officers of the Antique Millers Association, rice retailers and members of the Farmers Action Council. The trainings, held at the NFA Staffhouse and at the Culasi Multi-purpose Hall in Culasi, Antique were facilitated by the NFA's provincial food fortification committee headed by NFA provincial manager Procopio Trabajo II. Highlights of the training included discussions on program overview; implementing rules and regulations of RA 8976 or the Food Fortification Act of 2000; the rice fortification technology and the equipment used in rice fortification. For more information on NFA programs, the public may send their inquiries via the Text NFA Program through mobile number 0917-6210927.

POEA 24-HR HOTLINES 722-1144 • 722-1155

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Surigao del Sur
Municipality of BAROBO

INVITATION FOR BIDS

CONSTRUCTION OF BAROBO PUBLIC MARKET

"The Works include the General Requirements; Site Works; Concrete Works, Masonry Works; Wood and Plastic Works; Thermal moisture Protection Works; Doors and Windows; Finishing Works; Mechanical Works; and Electrical Works"

Loan No. 1843-PHI

1. The Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) has received a loan from the Asian Development Bank toward the cost of the Mindanao Basic Urban Services Sector Project. (MBUSSP), and it intends to apply part or the whole of the proceeds of this loan, together with the GOP counterpart funds, to payments under the contract for the ***Construction of Barobo Public Market/012-05PM.***
2. The **Municipality of Barobo, Surigao del Sur** now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the construction of the New Barobo Public Market, which has a total floor area of 1,713 sq. m. The Works shall include the General Requirements; Site Works; Concrete Works; Masonry Works; Metal Works; Wood and Plastic Works; Thermal and Moisture Protection Works; Doors and Windows; Finishing Works; Mechanical Works; and Electrical Works. Completion of the Works is required within ***305 calendar days.***
3. Bidding will be conducted in accordance with relevant procedures for open competitive bidding as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," to the extent it is consistent with Asian Development Bank's procurement procedures and is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in "*Guidelines for Procurement Under Asian Development Bank Loans.*"
4. The documents required in the Eligibility Documents shall be submitted as part of the Technical Documents of the Bidders as provided in the Instructions to Bidders.
5. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the ***Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), Municipality of Barobo, Surigao del Sur*** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from ***8:00 am to 5:00 pm*** on **November 28, 2005 to January 05, 2006.**
6. A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of ***Six Thousand Pesos (Php 6,000.00).*** The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative on or before ***January 05, 2006, 5:00 PM.***
7. The ***BAC, Municipality of Barobo*** will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders in ***December 20, 2005*** at the ***Municipal Budget Office, Barobo, Surigao del Sur.***
8. Eligible Bidders must submit their bids at the address below on or before ***January 6, 2006 @ 2:00 pm.*** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of *Bank Guarantee* and in an amount of *Four Hundred Fifty Thousand Pesos (Php 450,000.00)* or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bid opening shall be on ***January 6, 2006 @ 2:00 pm at the Municipal Budget Office Barobo Municipal hall, Barobo, Surigao del Sur.*** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below:

Municipal Budget Office
Attn: Ms. Mina Ronquillo
Municipality of Barobo
Province of Surigao del Sur

9. To be considered eligible and qualified a Bidder must:
   a. have a successful experience as prime contractor in the construction of at least one (1) work of a nature and complexity equivalent to the Works in the last five (5) years, such being verifiable from completion certificates. To comply with this requirement the single contract cited should be at least *Fourteen Million Pesos (Php 14.00M);*
   b. have a minimum average annual construction turnover over the last three (3) years equal to *Seventeen Million Pesos (Php 17.00M).*
   c. submit audited balance sheets or, if not required by the law of the applicants country, other financial statements acceptable to the Procuring Entity, for the last five (5) years to demonstrate the current soundness of the applicants financial position and its prospective long-term profitability.
10. Completion of the Works is required within ***305 Calendar Days.***
11. The ***Municipality of Barobo, Surigao del Sur*** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Attention: ***Ms. Mina U. Ronquillo***
Municipal Budget Officce
Municipal Hall, Barobo, Surigao del Sur

(Sgd.) **MINA U. RONQUILLO**
BAC Chairman

(PDI-Nov. 28 & Dec. 5, 2005)

PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
PNOC Energy Companies Bldg., Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, 1201 Taguig City, Philippines
P.O. Box 2102 MCPO Tel. No. 893-6001/1320

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors, registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) and classified, at least, as IAC Medium, Sub-Category A, General Engineering or General Building and must have completed within the last ten (10) years at least one contract for the civil, structural, and mechanical/piping works which is similar to the contract under bidding amounting to at least 50% of the approved budget, to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project.

CIVIL, STRUCTURAL, AND MECHANICAL/PIPING WORKS FOR THE CONVERSION OF TONGONAN REINJECTION TO PRODUCTION WELL (1R4), MG-9D PRODUCTION WELL HOOK-UP TO SS2, AND MAHANAGDONG A SS#1 DUMPLINE TO CONCRETE SILENCER
EDC 05-187

The Approved Budget is **PhP 12,195,200.00** chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is 150 calendar days.

Application forms for eligibility may be secured form the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group (c/o Francis T. Tolibas local 5179) starting **November 21, 2005** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Pesos: Two Hundred (PhP 200.00).**

A clarificatory meeting on the eligibility screening will be held on **December 1, 2005, 1:30 p.m.** at the BAC Conference Room, First Floor, Building V, PNOC-EDC, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila. The Application for Eligibility and Letter of Intent must be submited to the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group **not later than 2:00 p.m. of December 9, 2005.**

Bid documents will be available for issuance to eligible bidders starting **January 9, 2006** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Pesos: One Thousand Five Hundred (PhP 1,500.00).** Site inspection is on **January 19, 2006** at the Leyte Geothermal Production Field in Ormoc, Leyte. For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **January 23, 2006, 10:00 a.m.** at the BAC Conference Room, First Floor, Building V, PNOC-EDC, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila.

Sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group, First Floor, Building V, PNOC-EDC, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila **not later than 2:00 p.m. (Contracts Administration Group Office Wall Clock Time) of February 9, 2006** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

The Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Nov. 21 & 28, 2005)

ANNE CURTIS OPENS SM VALENZUELA. Gorgeous TV actress Anne Curtis, lead star of ABS CBN's daily soap opera *Kampanerang Kuba*, graced the recent opening of SM Valenzuela along MacArthur Highway, Valenzuela City. The event was managed and organized by Vidanes Advertising Talents Agency, an events and talent management company that handles casting for television commercials, print advertisements and local films as well as corporate advertising and promotions. It is a one-stop shop for all your marketing needs as it gives support to your brands from conceptualization to implementation—from actual development of effective marketing strategies to below-the-line activities such as corporate events, product launches, mall tours and artist booking. For talent bookings and inquiries, you may call 9267616 or 4266858 or email vidanes_inc@yahoo.com.

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
KAGAWARAN NG PANANALAPI
KAWANIHAN NG RENTAS INTERNAS

November 25, 2005

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PUBLIC BIDDING NO. 05-018, 05-019, 05-020, 05-021

1. The **Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR)**, through the **General Appropriations Act for CY 2006 and/or CY 2005 continuing appropriations**, intends to apply the sum of the following being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the ff.

PUBLIC BIDDING NO.	NAME OF CONTRACT	ABC	NON-REFUNDABLE FEE
05-018	Comprehensive Maintenance Services for the Emergency Generator Sets (EGS) and Accessories	P 848,126.52	P 1,000.00
05-019	Comprehensive Maintenance Services of Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS)	935,246.52	1,000.00
05-020	Lease of Servers for Various eServices Projects	70,560,000.00	70,560.00
05-021	Lease of Storage and Automated Tape Library for Various eServices Projects	16,449,840.00	16,449.00

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

2. The **Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR)**, now invites Bids from eligible bidders for the ff:

PUBLIC BIDDING NO.	DESCRIPTION	DELIVERY/ CONTRACT DURATION
05-018	*Comprehensive Maintenance Services of EGS at Computer Center (RCC), RDC-Manila and RDC-Quezon City*	January 1, 2006 - December 31, 2006
05-019	*Comprehensive Maintenance Services of UPS at the Revenue Computer Center (RCC), Command Center-NOB, RDC-Manila and RDC-Quezon City and Metro Manila District Offices*	January 1, 2006 - December 31, 2006
05-020	*The eServices servers shall continue operating to sustain the various projects including Tax Compliance and Verification Drive, Letter of Authority Monitoring, eCorrespondence, eSales, Accreditation and Registration, Automated Excise Data Management, and also the Datawarehouse and Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) systems, providing the Bureau with additional means for effective tax collection*	January 1, 2006 - December 31, 2006
05-021	*The Storage serves as the repository of eServices servers data while the ATL performs the backup of these data, conforming with the BIR backup strategy.*	January 1, 2006 - December 31, 2006

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of RA 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183 and subject to Commonwealth Act 138. Only bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, Instructions to Bidders (ITB). The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from BAC Secretariat, thru the Chief, Procurement Division at the address given below from 8:00 AM-5:00 PM starting **November 29, 2005.**
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon cash payment to the BIR Cashier of a non-refundable fee in the amount stated above.
6. **The Bureau of Internal Revenue will hold a Pre-bid Conference open to all interested parties** *at the 3rd Floor, Executive Conference Room, BIR-NOB, Diliman, Quezon City* on:

PUBLIC BIDDING NO.	PRE-BID CONFERENCE	TIME
05-018	December 12, 2005	9:00 AM
05-019	December 12, 2005	9:00 AM
05-020	December 12, 2005	1:30 PM
05-021	December 12, 2005	1:30 PM

7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before:

PUBLIC BIDDING NO.	DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF BIDS	TIME
05-018	December 27, 2005	9:00 AM
05-019	December 27, 2005	9:00 AM
05-020	December 27, 2005	1:30 PM
05-021	December 27, 2005	1:30 PM

All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security as stated in Section 22.1 of the Bid Data Sheet. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

8. Bid opening shall be on the following dates at the *3rd Floor, Executive Conference Room, Bureau of Internal Revenue, NOB, Diliman, Quezon City.* Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the above address.

PUBLIC BIDDING NO.	BID OPENING	TIME
05-018	December 27, 2005	9:00 AM
05-019	December 27, 2005	9:00 AM
05-020	December 27, 2005	1:30 PM
05-021	December 27, 2005	1:30 PM

9. **The Bureau of Internal Revenue** assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid. The BIR also reserves the right to reject any or all bids and accept the bids most advantageous to the government.
10. **The Bureau of Internal Revenue** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder/s.

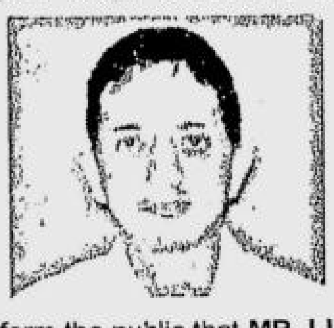
Bureau of Internal Revenue
Atty. James H. Roldan
Assistant Commissioner-Legal Service
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee
Rm. 605, 6/F Procurement Division
BIR-NOB, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel No. 9265547/Telefax No. 9282028
Email Address. bac@bir.gov.ph

(Sgd.) **JAMES H. ROLDAN**
Assistant Commissioner, Legal Service
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – Nov. 28 & Dec. 5, 2005)

Manila Water

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



This is to inform the public that **MR. LUIS ANTHONY MONTANEZ JOSE** whose picture appears above is no longer connected with Manila Water Company Inc. (MWCI)

Any transaction made or entered into with Mr. Jose after November 1, 2005 shall no longer be honored by Manila Water Co., Inc. (MWCI)

(PDI - Nov. 28, 2005)

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation
Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio
Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines
Telephone 8931320 ext. 5131 Fax 8401461

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

Lighting Works at Building 3, 4A and 4B under EDC 05-166-1

The Approved Budget is PHP3,010,231.47 chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is 40 calendar days.

Application forms for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group (c/o M. C. Uribe) **starting November 21, 2005, 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Pesos (PHP500.00).

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **November 24, 2005, 2:00 p.m. at the BAC Room, 1st Floor, Building V, PNOC-EDC, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila.**

Applications for Eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at PNOC-EDC, 1st Floor Bldg. 5, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila, **not later than 2:00 p.m. of (Contracts Administration Group Office Wall Clock Time) of December 2, 2005** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to abort the bidding process, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered the most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Nov 21 & 28, 2005)

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CAVITE

Palas Athena Subd Aguinaldo H-way Imus Cavite 303sqm 3br 2tb P10,700/mo. Call Sylvia 578-2145

CONDO/TWNHSE

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MANILA

Legarda LRT CEU 7245613

PASAY

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SAN JUAN

BIG 2STRY P9T 7008515

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CARS

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

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5Units 2002 Honda XLR200 0928-3895123, 0921-4940938

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1% AUTOLOAN 788-0361

1% Car Lending 656-0140 United Tree Car Loan Corp.

1% CARLOAN 373-6519

1% Easy Car Loan 4112547/48

1% w/out taking car 7262780

1% w/out taking car 5315577

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1.5% easy carloan 7815352/55

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1.5% w/oTaking Car 3732081/82

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

2% w/o taking car 7723810/12

2% w/o taking car 7880183-84

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

YAMAHA GRAND & UPRIGHT ELITE PIANO CENTER Almost New:TERMS-7213124

DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION FOR NEGOTIATED OFFER

The Development Bank of the Philippines will entertain offers on a First-Come, First-Served basis at the Asset Management Department, Ground Floor, DBP Head Office, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City for the following properties:

CODE NO.	DESCRIPTION	AREA (SQ.M)	LOCATION	FLOOR PRICE
REAL ESTATE				
METRO MANILA				
AM-JA-260	Residential lot (TCT No. T-90041)	42,242	Bo. Pinalagad, Malinta, Valenzuela City	P20,000,000.00
BULACAN				
AM-RT-261	House and Lot (TCT No. T-370563)	49	Lot 1, Blk. 1, Grottoville Homes, Brgy. Gaya-Gaya (now Brgy. Graceville), San Jose Del Monte	P 370,700.00
DAVAO			Kristina Homes Subd., Lizada, Toril, Davao City	
AM-RT-262	House and Lot (TCT No. T-347755)	110	Lot 23 Blk 1	P 126,600.00
AM-RT-263	House and Lot (TCT No. T-347752)	110	Lot 35 Blk 3	P 126,600.00
AM-RT-264	House and Lot (TCT No. T-347750)	110	Lot 4 Blk 5	P 126,600.00
AM-RT-265	House and Lot (TCT No. T-347748)	110	Lot 34 Blk 3	P 126,600.00
AM-RT-266	House and Lot (TCT No. T-347754)	110	Lot 18 Blk 5	P 126,600.00
AM-RT-267	House and Lot (TCT No. T-347753)	110	Lot 37 Blk 3	P 126,600.00
AM-RT-268	House and Lot (TCT No. T-347749)	110	Lot 15 Blk 5	P 126,600.00
LAGUNA				
AM-RT-269	House and Lot (TCT No. T-616407)	47	Lot 9 Blk. 8, St. Joseph Village 6, Phase 1, Butong, Cabuyao	P 229,000.00
NUEVA ECIJA			Vista Amor Subd., Bangad, Cabanatuan City	
AM-RT-270	House and Lot (TCT No. T-116963)	100	Lot 45 Blk 2	P 282,600.00
AM-RT-271	House and Lot (TCT No. T-116962)	100	Lot 7 Blk 2	P 333,800.00
AM-RT-272	House and Lot (TCT No. T-116960)	100	Lot 16 Blk 1	P 297,100.00
AM-RT-273	House and Lot (TCT No. T-116961)	100	Lot 7 Blk 7	P 297,100.00
AM-RT-274	House and Lot (TCT No. T-114462)	100	Lot 21 Blk 2	P 257,600.00
AM-RT-275	House and Lot (TCT No. T-118074)	100	Lot 19 Blk 2	P 273,200.00
AM-RT-276	House and Lot (TCT No. T-118072)	100	Lot 13 Blk 2	P 307,000.00
AM-RT-277	House and Lot (TCT No. T-118071)	100	Lot 27 Blk 2	P 297,100.00
AM-RT-278	House and Lot (TCT No. T-118073)	100	Lot 15 Blk 1	P 292,900.00
PAMPANGA				
AM-JA-279	Agro-industrial lot (TCT No. T-587529-R) with bldgs. & imp.	21,408	Bo. San Isidro, Minalin	P13,900,000.00
CHATTELS				
AM-PY-280	M/T "CQS ODYSSEY", an ABS-classed self-propelled coconut oil tanker, welded mild steel hull, single deck, 496.64 tons-GT, 315.36 tons-NT, built 1998, powered by 2-units CATERPILLAR Marine Diesel Engine with standard accessories and navigational equipment docked at San Miguel Corp. Wharf, Cotta, Lucena City			P78,942,000.00

Forms for negotiated offers may be obtained from AMD-Acquired Assets.

For inquiries, please call telephone numbers: 892-1566 / 893-7172 or 818-9511 local 2158 / 2159.

ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

(PDI – November 28, 2005)

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

PETS

DOG TRAINER 0919-7219020

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PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

JAC FILIPINAS PAWNSHOP INC.
G/F Ever Gotesco Grand Central Caloocan City will sell all unredeemed pledges for the month of MAY & JUNE 2005 on December 19,2005 at 11:00am J.Lanuza-Auctioneer.
(PDI - November. 28, 2005)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that PAG-IBIG HOUSING BOND Cert. Nos. 009044-49 Denomination P5000.00 each issued by the Home Pag-ibig Fund under the name of DOMINADOR A. BAUTISTA were lost. pls Call /Text 0919-8401163. If no contest received new cert. will be issued (PDI-Nov. 28, Dec. 5, & 12, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Pilar Street, Zamboanga City

NOTICE TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY

Effective January 1, 2006, only eligible suppliers will be allowed to join in ZCWD biddings for the procurement of GOODS conducted thru alternative modes of procurement that does not require the posting of a bidder's bond.

In view of the aforementioned, all interested suppliers may already apply for eligibility with the ZCWD BAC Secretariat located at the 3/F ZCWD Main Bldg., Pilar St., Zamboanga City. Deadline for the submission of the eligibility documents is during office hours on **December 19, 2005**. After the evaluation, the BAC I shall issue a "Certificate of Eligibility" to the eligible suppliers upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of P2,000.00. The "Certificate of Eligibility" will be valid for a period of one (1) year from the date of issue, unless earlier revoked for cause.

The following are the required eligibility documents:

1. Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) business name registration or SEC registration certificate, whichever may be appropriate under existing laws of the Philippines;
2. Valid and current Mayor's Permit/municipal license;
3. Taxpayer's Identification Number;
4. Statement of the suppliers that it is not "Blacklisted" or barred from bidding by the Government or any of its agencies, offices, corporations, or LGUs, including non-inclusion in the consolidated Blacklisting Report issued by the GOP.
5. The supplier's audited financial statements, stamped "received" by the BIR or its duly accredited and authorized institutions, for the immediately preceding calendar year, showing among others, the prospective Bidder's total and current assets and liabilities.

(Sgd.) ARNULFO A. ALFONSO
Chairman-BAC I

(PDI–Nov. 28, 2005)

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

earnextranow.com code: atb2004 8531008 09178901851

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RETIRE 2YRS 09189051567

RTW CONSIGN 0917-8830002

NEED SIDELINE! Set your Hrs! P/F up tp 20K/mo. 376-2642 & 44

BUSINESS FOR SALE

Mall Shop 4Sale 70T Move In B4 Xmas 0917-8866716

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

FEMALE

Homecare Nurse Single 5333495

SECRETARY
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- Nissan SERENA
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- TOYOTA GRANVIA / REGULUS
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OBITUARIES

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Funeral Home and Crematory
845-2334 to 38; 845-2440

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

1. Copy of Death Certificate
2. Any identification document (I.D.)

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT

MESSAGE OF THANKS

DEATH ANNIVERSARY

REQUIEMS

FREE OBIT DESIGN

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS and bank-to-bank payments

"My soul, be at rest in God alone from whom comes my hope."

AGAPITA "PITANG" ACUÑA ANGELES

of No. 8 Palico I, Imus, Cavite

Peacefully joined our Lord on November 27, 2005 at the age of 88.

Her loving brother, **Bening & wife Fely**; sister-in-law, **Linda Angeles**, together with nephews & niece, **Chay & Egay, Neneng & Hernan, Usie, Annie, Adie & Marcial, Jojo & Lolit, Boggie & Candy**; grandchildren, relatives and friends, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at her residence at No. 8 Palico I, Imus, Cavite.

Interment will be on December 06, 2005
after the 2:30 p.m. Mass at Imus Cathedral
Church at Imus Cemetery.

MILAGROS PASION CABALU

A Celebration of Life
for our IMA
Born on November 29, 1930
Joined her Creator on November 27, 2005.

She was well-loved by her children JOSE & DIDIN, ZITA & GREG, LINO (deceased), CRIS, HELEN & ARNEL, RONALD & YEN and LIZA & TOM and her grandchildren JOJO, JODIE, JAMIE, JOELLA, JAY, PAUL, ARLENE, HAYDEN, GABY, JOSHUA and BENJAMIN.

A Celebration of Life Mass will be held on Tuesday, November 29 at 6:30 p.m.

Body lies in state at La Funeraria Paz, G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City until Wednesday, November 30 after which remains will be transferred to Funeraria Enriquez, Tarlac, Tarlac. Body will be laid to rest on Friday, December 2, 2005 after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

> "I am the resurrection and life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever believes in Me will never die."
> John 11:25-26

AVELINO T. PUA

Peacefully joined his Creator on November 23, 2005 in Tao-Yuan, Taiwan

His remains were cremated last November 26, 2005 in Taiwan.

His loving children **MICHAEL, & MICHELLE**, children-in-law **LOIDA & PHILIP**, grandchildren & other relatives mourn his passing & his eternal rest.

His cremated remains lies in state at Our Lady of Consolation Parish Church, 81 Alondras Street, Mira-Nila Homes, Tandang Sora, Q.C. (Pls. enter Tierra Pura Subd.)

Interment is to be announced later.

GOD HAS YOU IN HIS KEEPING
WE HAVE YOU IN OUR HEARTS

REPERTORY PHILIPPINES

remembers

Zeneida "Bibot" Angara Amador

(February 7, 1933 - November 28, 2004)

on her First Year Death Anniversary

Masses will be offered in the following churches:

St. Alphonsus Mary de Ligouri Parish, Magallanes Village, Makati	6:00am, 7:00am, 12:15nn, 6:00pm
Santuario de San Antonio Parish, Forbes Park, Makati	12:15nn, 6:00pm
Greenbelt Chapel, Greenbelt Park, Makati	12:15nn, 5:45pm
St. John Bosco Parish, Makati	12:15nn
St. James Parish, Alabang	6:30pm
St. Andrew the Apostle Parish, Reposo Street, Makati	6:00pm
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, New Manila, Quezon City	6:00pm
Sto. Domingo Parish, Quezon Avenue, Quezon City	6:00pm
Santuario de San Jose, Greenhills	6:15pm
Malate Catholic Church Our Lady of Remedios Parish	6:00pm
Nuestra Señora de Guia Parish, Ermita	6:00pm
Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish, Binondo	5:30pm
Sta. Cruz Parish, Manila	6:15pm
San Isidro Catholic Parish, Pasay	6:00pm
San Jose Parish, San Jose Camarines Sur	6:30am
Bais Central, Negros Oriental	6:00pm
Chapel of the Cartwheels, Hacienda Sta. Rosalia, Manapla, Negros Occidental	6:30am
St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Old Poblacion, Escalante City, Negros Occidental	6:00am
Nuestra Sra. del Espino Plaza Castilla, Madrid	
Nuestra Sra. Desamparados, Madrid	

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28

CLASSIFIEDS

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
SILANG WATER DISTRICT
M.H. Del Pilar Cor. E. Montoya Sts., Silang, Cavite

INVITATION TO BID

The government of the Philippines has received a loan from the Federal Republic of Germany through the KREDITANSTALT FUER WIEDERAUFBAU (KfW) to finance the implementation of Provincial Towns Water Supply Programs I and II (PTWSP I & II).

The SILANG WATER DISTRICT (SWD), the executing agency, is inviting interested licensed contractors and joint ventures to submit bids for the implementation of the KfW Well Drilling Project. The Project involves the drilling of two (2) wells in Kaong and Lalaan I, Silang, Cavite with an Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) of P 5,038,800.00.

Interested local contractors should be classified by, and registered with the PCAB for General Engineering with Specialty Classification in Well Drilling Works. For foreign contractors, a special license shall be secured from PCAB and has to be submitted prior to the award of the contract.

The works shall include but are not limited to the drilling of a 400 m of 100mm diameter pilot holes; reaming of pilot holes to boreholes with diameter of 400 mm; supply and installation of casings / stainless steel screens with diameter of 250 mm; well development by treatment with appropriate mud thinner, surging and bailing, high velocity water jetting and airlift methods; and conduct step drawdown and continuous discharge pumping tests to evaluate well performance and hydraulic characteristics of the aquifer.

Interested contractors may personally obtain Tender Documents at a nominal non-refundable fee of P 4,000.00 not later than December 6, 2005 from The Secretariat, Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), SWD Annex Building, E. Gonzales St., Silang, Cavite, Philippines.

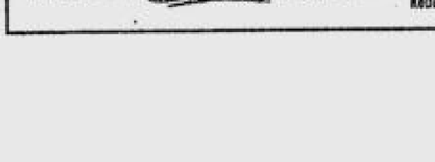
The pre-bid conference and the deadline for submission of bids are scheduled on – December 7, 2005 and December 19, 2005, respectively.

The SWD reserves the right to reject or all bids, to waive minor informality in the bids received and to award the Contract to the Bidder whose bids, as evaluated by BAC, is the most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. ALBERTO L. RESURRECCION**
Chairman, BAC

(PDI-Nov. 22 & 28, 2005)

From the nation's No. 1 Newspaper
INQUIRER



JOB Market
Read it every Sunday with the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

National Irrigation Administration
Region 13

Standard Form Number: SF-INFR-05
Revised on: July 29, 2004

Contract Reference Number
Name of Contract
Location of the Contract

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Irrigation Administration (NIA), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract : Construction of 1 Unit Diversion Dam
Location : La Paz, Agusan del Sur
Brief Description : Construction of 1 Unit Diversion Dam
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) : P 12,244,980.00
Contract Duration : 180 Calendar Days

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Forms) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

BAC Activities	Schedule
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility	Dec. 6 – 20, 2005
2. Issuance of Eligibility Forms	Dec. 7 – 20, 2005
3. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	Dec. 12 – 20, 2005
4. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	Dec. 14 – 20, 2005
5. Issuance of Bid Documents	Dec. 21, 2005 – Jan. 17, 2006
6. Pre-bid Conference	Jan. 5, 2006 at 1:00 P.M.
7. Receipt and Opening of Bids	Jan. 17, 2006 at 1:00 P.M.

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms at NIA-Region 13, Bancasi, Butuan City, upon their submission of a LOI, and upon their payment of a non-refundable amount of P 500.00 (fee for Eligibility Form) to the NIA's Cashier. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements IN 3 sets (1 original duly marked and 2 duly certified and marked photocopies) to the BAC at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P 5,000.00 (fee for Bidding Documents) to the NIA Cashier.

The NIA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate of indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved by:
(Sgd.) **RAFAEL A. ALAS, JR.**
BAC Chairman

Noted:
(Sgd.) **DEMOCRATICO P. GRANA, JR. CESO V**
Regional Manager

(PDI - Nov. 28 & Dec. 4, 2005)

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PHILIPPINE ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY
MACTAN ECONOMIC ZONE I
Lapu-lapu City
Tel. Nos. : 3400590, 3400594, 3400591
Telefax No. : 3402949

Proposed Site Dev. at PTC
MEZ I

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The PHILIPPINE ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY, through its MEZ Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract : Proposed Site Development at the Philippine Tonan Corporation's Leased Lot at the MEZ I and Installation of Drainage System on Lot A-1 at the MEZ I
Location MEZ I, Lapu-lapu City
Brief Description Supply of Labor, Materials, Equipment and Supervision for Proposed Site Development at the PTC's leased lot and Installation of Drainage System on Lot A-1 at the MEZ I.
Approved Budget for the Contract : P5,044,664.53
Contract Duration : 150 calendar days

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and own equipment listed below available for the prosecution of the contract:

– Dump truck	– 2 units
– Excavator (Breaker/Backhoe)	– 2 units – CAT 320 or equivalent equipment capacity
– Pay Loader	– 2 units – TCM 865 or equivalent equipment capacity

The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/ Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

BAC Activities	Schedule
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility	November 18-30, 2005
2. Issuance of Eligibility forms	November 18-30, 2005
3. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements Deadline	December 1, 2005 5:00 p.m.
4. Notice of Result of Eligibility Check	December 7, 2005
5. Issuance of Bid Documents	December 8-12, 2005
6. Pre-bid Conference	January 12, 2006 2:00 p.m.
7. Receipt & Opening of Bids	January 26, 2006 2:00 p.m.

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms at MEZ I BAC Secretariat, 2nd Floor, PEZA Administration Bldg., MEZ I, Lapu-lapu City upon submission of a LOI, and upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P100.00 to the PEZA Cashier, Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to BAC at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P2,500.00 to the PEZA Cashier.

The PEZA reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders and assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:
(Sgd.) **ROLANDO Q. PATALINJUG**
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Negotiation period for IS property sale extended

Lone offer way below gov't asking price

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT HAS EXTENDED until December the negotiation period for the sale of a Makati property that used to house the International School.

The decision was made after the government got only one offer when, after a failed bidding, the property was offered for a negotiated sale. The bid was way below the floor price.

Jose A.R. Bengzon III, head of the Privatization Management Office, said the lone bidder was Robinsons Land Corp. He, however, declined to divulge RLC's offer.

Bengzon said the PMO opted to extend the offer and negotiation period since two more entities had expressed intention to bid.

He said RLC, likewise, proposed the extension so it could improve its offer.

Aside from Robinsons Land Corp., Ayala Land Inc. earlier expressed interest to bid for the property. Ayala showed up in the scheduled bidding last week, but it did not submit an offer.

Bengzon said two more firms said they would likely submit a bid in December, but he refused to disclose their identities.

The government set a minimum floor price of P1.86 billion for the former IS property.

The 4.8-hectare former IS property along Kalayaan Avenue in Makati City was expected to attract several prospective buyers because of its strategic location. However, the PMO said prospective bidders could have been turned off by the floor price.

Last week's auction was already the fourth failed bidding for the property.

If the government would get an attractive bid in December, Bengzon said the PMO could complete the property's privatization before the end of the year.

The property was originally owned by the International School but was turned over to the government in 1975.

In August 2000, the government decided to place the former IS property in the list of assets to be privatized. IS has since transferred to Fort Bonifacio Global City.

URC to offer fitness drink

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

GOKONGWEI-LED Universal Robina Corp. is introducing a new fitness drink called "Rush," following the success of its green tea brand "C2."

URC president Lance Gokongwei said "Rush," contained in a blue bottle, was tested in the market recently.

Gokongwei, however, declined to reveal more details about the new drink which would soon be formally launched.

To power its expansion into the beverage business, URC will raise $72 million or roughly P3.9 billion from the proposed sale of 365 million shares to international and local investors in January 2006.

URC closed at P17.75 a share last Friday. The sale of 365 million shares at current market prices would raise P6.48 billion.

Proceeds of the sale would be used largely to jack up the production of C2.

Gokongwei said the company was planning to build one beverage plant overseas and six local production lines here. It will cost between $10 million and $12 million to build one beverage production plant, Gokongwei estimated.

He refused to reveal where in Asia URC will build its C2 plant.

Gokongwei said the JG Summit Group was also considering selling some of its shares in URC and other subsidiaries to increase the free-float of shares in the market.

"We will take the opportunity provided by this offering to raise additional funds for URC's continuing expansion. "We also believe we can achieve through this offering a market capitalization that will be attractive for many global institutional investors," Gokongwei said.

He said URC would expand its sugar milling and refining capacity in Negros to support the expansion of its beverage business.

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BUSINESS Monday
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Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

MVP draws parallels between old PLDT and gov't

By Clarissa S. Batino

IS THERE STILL HOPE FOR THE government?

There is, if you ask Manuel V. Pangilinan, chair of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. who had just been chosen this year's Management Man of the Year by the Management Association of the Philippines.

Popularly known as MVP, Pangilinan has earned for himself quite a reputation with his Midas touch with problematic companies, which he managed to turnaround, such as PLDT, Pilipino Telephone Corp. and Metro Pacific Corp.

There was a time, he said, when PLDT behaved like any government bureaucracy. Now, PLDT is one of, if not the strongest, corporate players in the country.

Pangilinan, during his keynote speech at the 43rd annual meeting of the Philippine Economic Society last Wednesday, recalled that in 1998, when Hong Kong's First Pacific Co. Ltd. had just invested in PLDT, the local telco giant exhibited really bad habits.

PLDT then, he noted, had a bureaucracy and a culture not too different from that of the government.

"Employees start to queue for lunch at 11:30 a.m., and lights went out at lunchtime. Our revenues were under pressure, costs bloated, debts too large, cash flows tight, and credit rating downgraded," said Pangilinan. "Doesn't all this sound familiar?

PLDT's ways, he said, were unacceptable at that time when the telecom industry was at a crossroads.

"International accounting rates were falling fast, severely reducing international revenues. The cellular business was expanding exponentially, but was eroding subscriber growth in fixed lines. Texting volume was growing faster than the avian flu, but eating away at our voice business." These, MVP told his audience of economists, were the realities of the time.

Swift transformation

A transformation had to be made and it had to be swift. The result as we now know was one for the books.

PLDT is now the most profitable company, thanks to the strong contribution of its mobile unit Smart Communications Inc. and the recovery of Pilipino Telephone Corp. PLDT is expecting more than P32 billion in net profits this year.

"It is tempting—if not hazardous—to draw similarities between corporate governance and public governance, between our experience at PLDT and our view of the Philippine economy," said Pangilinan.

Like the private sector, government actually has the means and the power to effect a change. In fact, it even has a power to tax, which private companies do not have, according to MVP.

"In the corporate context, the solution would be obvious—to turn out enough cash to reduce operating deficits and pay down debts, and ultimately produce savings to make new investments," he said.

"The trick, of course, lies in generating the needed cash in the first place. We in the private sector typically resort to painful cost-cutting and selling of assets," Pangilinan noted.

He wondered why privatization of government assets had been "mystifyingly laborious."

Perhaps, the government's problem lies with a lack of focus and clear vision, according to the telecom czar.

Take the case of the government's Medium-Term Development Program, the country's economic blueprint.

"The MTDP's goals are one too many, as to be incapable of complete and genuine achievement," he said.

"They look more like a litany of aspirations rather than an actionable blueprint. In fact, I find its goals overwhelming and not dissimilar to what the emperor of Austria once said about Mozart's work—'too many notes!'"

Under the MTDP, the government plans to grow the economy by 7 percent to 8 percent by 2009.

It also aims to raise the share of investments to 28 percent of economic growth by 2010, boost exports by $50 billion by 2006, create at least 1.7 million jobs by 2009 and reduce poverty to below 20 percent of the population by 2009.

"Consequently, this lack of focus precisely impairs the capability to craft sound economic plans. And below standard plans in turn vitiates the ability to execute them well," MVP noted.

Several reforms in the past, he said, had also done the Philippines quite a disservice.

Some, like the agrarian reform and the service area scheme that fully deregulated the telecom industry had failed to achieve what it had set out to do.

Liberalization

Liberalization of key sectors like telecom only opened the field to so many players fighting over a very small market plagued with limited consumer power, if not outright poverty.

In the end, nobody really benefited from such open market policy except a few profitable telcos, some banks and foreign suppliers.

Pangilinan said that aside from having a clear and focused vision of what needed to be done, the government must first admit that problems do exist in order to identify solutions.

Third, he said there must be "a willingness to risk losing one's position—no matter how lofty it may be—so that things can get done for the sake of the constituents one serves."

In the end, he said, everything would boil down to leadership.

PANGILINAN

"Unless the quality of the country's leadership is raised—principally through a demonstration of political will—the cloud of uncertainty cannot fully dissipate, and the economy, notwithstanding its resilience, cannot rise to its full potential," according to Pangilinan.

While the Philippines' economic growth rate was not exactly in the cellar among Asian countries, it had yet to be at the top of the heap.

"This consigns us to the rank of the average performers. And I'm just not sure we should accept that."

As a personal crusade, MVP accepted in July the offer to chair ailing Makati Medical Corp. It had yet to be seen whether his golden touch could bring the once prestigious hospital back on its feet.

But with him on board, Makati Med has a better chance of finding a cure.

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Solve RP's poverty problem through mango exports

AN AGRO-INDUSTRIAL VENTURE—The Good Harvest Group—has come up with a very affordable, attractive and credible business opportunity package not only for individuals, but also for foreign and local corporations, cooperatives and even the ordinary Filipino family.

Through its mango-for-export business program, participants spend not more than P18 a day as maintenance and servicing cost of each mango tree during its first five formative years. Subsequently, participants need not spend a single centavo more because by then, Good Harvest would be implementing its harvest sharing system.

This P18 per day cost can be recovered after the fifth year when the company starts exporting the mango harvests to the world market, explained Group Founder and CEO Ralph W. Lopez.

This is made possible by utilizing contract farming arrangements as implemented through turnkey mango farming, which is Good Harvest's expertise.

Participants also get to enjoy, for free, the orchard's tourist-class amenities, such as its swimming pool, picnic grove, mountain trekking and camping areas, horse-riding trails, *salakot* pavilion and natural waterfalls.

Miss Earth contestants had a first-hand taste of the orchard's amenities when they visited the site as part of their nature exposure itinerary last October.

For its services, Good Harvest collects a small percentage from the collective income on a harvest-fee basis after the fifth year or during the productive years of the mango trees. This is not dissimilar to the "pausok" practice in rural farming communities.

The Good Harvest Group began its trials of the mango orchard in 2001 first as an advocacy—that mango orchards-for-export can be viable and can be undertaken side by side with sustainable reforestation in mind.

Back then, many existing orchard operators thought the group was embarking on an impossible dream.

But by using the best farm practices in the world on site selection, gene pooling and the other technical aspects, combined with the usual business fine-tuning, Good Harvest has since then reaped 37 business awards, eight of them in October this year alone.

Government attention

The farm trials got the attention of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)-Region 3, which immediately asked Good Harvest to submit a comprehensive production and reforestation plan that then became the basis for the grant of a socialized industrial forest management award (Sifma).

ANTONIO ROLA is the acknowledged father of Philippine mango farming.

From an initial 300 hectares, the DENR now has a standing commitment for an additional 1,000 hectares of barren forest lands in Bagac, Bataan for development, the Good Harvest way.

Good Harvest chose its pilot site in Bagac, Bataan because of its good soil condition; its ideal location (protected naturally by two mountain ranges) and the presence of a natural water reserve area where the company gets water for the farm and other resort facilities like the swimming pool.

"We have attracted and recently forged a contract farming agreement with the 505,000-strong union of the Department of Education and we are doing the same for the DENR and the Department of Agriculture," Lopez said.

If each of the union's 505,000 members owned a mango tree, "then we would be reforesting more than 3,300 hectares of barren forest land. This way, we would essentially be rebuilding the ecological systems of our countryside," Lopez said.

Attracting tree owners

Consequently, Lopez said that at the rate Good Harvest has been successfully attracting tree owners and concluding contract farming agreements for several hundred thousand trees, "we might be asking DENR to expand our Sifma areas sooner than later."

"My project simply democratizes mango tree ownership by getting business participants who spend a minimal upfront service cost while my company maintains and manages the orchard, and markets the produce for them in exchange for a harvest-based sharing agreement," Lopez said.

"Many Filipinos want to get into the mango export business but do not have land and the money to get into orchard and export marketing operations. Also, many Filipinos would love to pitch in their share of reforestation and forest preservation advocacies for their country's future generations but don't have the means and the knowhow to do so," Lopez explained.

The choice of Bagac as the orchard site jibes with the company's 12-point farm services and technology (FS&T) program and the mango farming and exporting (MFE) programs, which ensure optimum quality and exportable quantity. Both programs are patented to the company.

The company uses its patented 12-point farm services and technology (FS&T) system that calls for strict and scientific site selection, gene pooling, daily planting, nurturing and caring and application of high grade eco-friendly pest control and nutrients. Good Harvest also taps the expert services of international mango farming agro-scientists and consultants to ensure the best quality of Good Harvest brand of mangoes.

Sifma is being granted by DENR to companies and organizations that commit to reforest the barren mountains and former forest lands of the country either with hardwood or with fruit trees.

Good Harvest does it both ways: it plants rows upon rows of mango trees side by side with rows of hardwood that serves as its natural biosecurity from harsh winds and storms. This scheme also becomes the natural source of organic fertilizer for both the mango and hardwood trees, Lopez said.

WTO study

Lopez got his inspiration for the democratized mangoes-for-export venture from an earlier study of the World Trade Organization (WTO) stating that "the Philippines can solve poverty through mango exports."

Lopez said that although the Philippines holds the Guinness Book record for the "best and sweetest mango variety out of 1,168 cultivars around the world," it supplied only 2.5 percent of total world demand.

"The room for growth in our mango exports is truly immense and Good Harvest opened the opportunity to engage in the lucrative export business to entrepreneurs, organizations, unions and even foreign fruit-buying companies," Lopez said.

"Theoretically speaking, if 10 percent of the 1.2 billion Chinese market would eat just one mango from the Philippines each year, then that would require produce from about eight to 10 million export variety mango trees," Lopez stressed.

Plant spacing utilized by Good Harvest is 7 meters by 7 meters or 9 by 9 based on global planting standards with constant crown pruning to ensure that soil nutrients would be best used by the fruits and not wasted on unwanted branches, twigs and leaves, explained Lopez.

Its patented 12-point farm services and technology (FST) program initially targets to plant one million trees of export-quality mangoes in just 6 to 8 years. Assisting Lopez in the mango orchard business is Antonio Rola, the acknowledged father of Philippine mango farming, together with professional farm managers, foresters and veteran exporters.

Good Harvest's unique turnkey mango farming venture dovetails the government's efforts to create jobs and livelihood opportunities, enhance the environment through reforestation and alleviate poverty by increasing the country's competitiveness in the global mango market through improved productivity. DENR, in fact, has already invited Good Harvest to implement its mango orchard program throughout the country to help attain these goals, Lopez said.

So that in the end, the success of Good Harvest's pioneering venture becomes the collective success not only of its participants but also of our national fruit, our entire country and our people.

Stop people from quitting, make them enjoy work

EMPLOYEE TURNOVER IS AN issue in any workplace but Daniel Jay DeVries, president of OSRP, the newly-opened subsidiary of US company PC Mall Inc. believes the way to stop the cycle is to make people enjoy their jobs and be treated fairly.

Aside from hiring its own employees (instead of doing it on a contractual basis), OSRP is not focused on traditional call center operations where most turnovers occur.

The Manila office at the 2nd level of Edsa Central Pavilion, Greenfield District, Mandaluyong is the first office outside North America.

With headquarters in Los Angeles, California, many offices within the US, and a branch in Canada, OSRP sells computer technology products to US businesses, consumers, government and educational institutions, posting approximately $1.2B in sales last year.

"Most of our people are going to be sales people. Instead of just taking calls that are coming in, they will make calls out and try to form a relationship with people who buy IT products in the US. In addition to a base salary, they're going to get a commission, which is not what happens with most call centers. So literally the better they are at their job, the more money they make. It doesn't matter how long they've been with us; somebody who has been with us for six months can make a lot of money. It's a performance thing… you kind of write your own ticket. So hopefully we can avoid some of the turnover with that."

Consumers do a lot of purchasing during the last quarter of the year because of the holiday season so OSRP always adds extra personnel heading into that period.

OSRP General Manager Komal Shah says, "We're actively recruiting people right now, and the first batch is already in here. So it's a very aggressive time schedule, which makes it a little bit more exciting for us."

The company is looking for computer programmers, accountants, magazine and Internet graphic designers; fresh graduates are also invited to send in their resumés.

DeVries is optimistic: "Our plans are to see how we can expand our operation over here. Our company is a growing company and we want part of that growth to come to the Philippines."

OSRP president Daniel Jay DeVries

The Edsa Central Greenfield District is accredited by the Philippine Export Zone Authority (PEZA) as an Information Technology (IT) Zone.

Dan DeVries, the Edsa Central office will have majority of its employees in place by year's end. The first batch of workers will do back office operations, with most of the people focused on Internet content.

The next round will consist of IT people like web programmers, web designers and application designers, as well as accounting and credit processing people.

The final batch of employees is going to be taken up by call center people who will provide technical support and customer service.

"We'll know by the end of the year or the first quarter of 2006 where we're going on the whole expansion plan. We're pretty excited," he says.

The team that made it easy for OSRP to make the move to Edsa Central is EnVision, which does Project Assurance for OSRP and other American and European companies that plan to operate in the Philippines. "As the local consultant, EnVision helps foreign companies with the nitty-gritties of setting up an office here: from studying capital and operating expenses, and complying with business and legal requirements to evaluating potential office sites, and recruiting qualified personnel," said President Toby Castillo.

The Philippine office of OSRP is an offshore branch which means that no local staff is hired as a temporary agent: "Nobody is contractual, they're all part of our company," DeVries explains.

Talking the walk

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Niceto S. Poblador

IN AN ARTICLE THAT APPEARED recently on the Web, Stanford professor Jeffrey Pfeffer asked: "Why can't we get things done?"

He notes that despite the billions of dollars spent on management training programs, thousands of books on management published, and over 80,000 MBA graduates turned out annually in the United States alone ... "not much happens in organizations" (www.fastcompany.com/magazine/35/pfeffer.html).

Pfeffer speculated that the reason for this was the Knowing-Doing Gap (title of a recent book of his): Managers do know but they are loathe to put their knowledge to good use.

To use an American expression, they don't "walk the talk."

Let me take this issue one step further. I think that many managers do walk the talk. It's just that they're walking the wrong talk.

To be sure, managers do get things done. But the knowledge they use that do get things done is NOT the knowledge they have learned in graduate school or in expensive management seminars.

It is the tacit, firm-specific knowledge that they have learned the hard way: on the job. This is the knowledge they have picked up by "talking the walk."

Unique solutions

Current management thinking views organizations as complex systems that evolve along different paths. From this perspective, each organization is unique and faces equally unique problems.

These problems are not easy to classify into neat categories that can be handled by applying standard decision rules and procedures. Yet, this is exactly the kind of formulaic approach to management that we encourage in MBA classrooms and management seminars.

The management that we teach is normative: we prescribe WHAT to do and HOW under certain types of situations. We tend to be relatively silent on the WHY.

As a result, practicing managers are unable to establish meaningful trade-offs when they find themselves in situations where they have to choose between one course of action and another.

They are clueless on how to fine-tune standard norms and decision rules to make them more directly applicable to the types of problems that they face. They are incapable of fashioning their own innovative approaches in dealing with unfamiliar challenges.

Most important of all, they are unable to learn effectively from their own experiences.

Gray areas

In today's complex world of business, the problems and issues faced by managers defy easy classification, and approaches in dealing with them are not easy to define or even to specify.

Consider the following deeply entrenched management themes:

(1) The Vision Thing. In our classroom or seminar presentations, we praise the visionary leader to high heavens, and urge our students and seminar participants to be focused on clearly-defined visions for their organizations.

There is of course a romantic ring to being visionary, but there is also a downside to it. By being too focused on a single, clearly defined corporate vision, we tend to lose "peripheral vision."

I think that the ability to look at alternative directions for the organization has become increasingly relevant in a fast-paced business environment

(2) Learning from Others. We encourage our students and seminar participants to learn from the experience of others. The standard metaphor is all too convincing: "Don't re-invent the wheel," we urge them, "the right kind of wheel for the right purpose already exists."

Thus, we prescribe a number of "Best Practices" that we assume to work equally well in any organization.

But if each organization is truly unique, then, this tacit assumption of universality should be carefully re-examined. Kaizen is best for Toyota but certainly not for GM. Six Sigma works beautifully for GE, but I doubt if something like it will work equally well for AOL/Time Warner.

In my thinking, each organization must invent its own solutions because no solution works equally well in different organizations, and no organization can adapt equally well to different solutions.

(3) Balancing Scorecards. The Balanced Scorecard formula is a classic example of something old and familiar (stakeholder theory) dressed up in a catchy phrase, just like many other popular management fads.

But teaching the Balanced Scorecard as described in the best-selling book is a lot easier than explaining the Principal-Agent Theory of the firm, from which it derives its basic propositions.

(4) Passion for Precision. Decisions, we say, must be based on hard (i.e, numerical) data. Hard data are assumed to reflect the "real world" more accurately than "fuzzy" information.

They do not for the following reasons: (a) Numerical data are often the result of aggregation of individual observations. Much accuracy is lost in the process of aggregation. (b) Aggregate data are then classified, condensed, and tabulated. A good deal more of accuracy is lost in these processes. (c) The tabulated data are then analyzed and evaluated by lower-level managers before these are incorporated in a formal report for submission to higher levels where the relevant decisions are to be made. More information is lost in the process. (d) Once finally acted upon, the data have become stale and of little strategic value.

(5) On Being Proactive. Here is another shibboleth which I find downright inane in a business environment where everything is unpredictable. Rumsfeld "proacted" before he sent out his invading troops; yet he is still mired in the desert sands of Iraq.

Michael Schumacher reacts, and he keeps on winning. I could not put it any simpler than that!

As in the political arena, there are no blacks nor whites in management. Everything lies in between.

The name of the game is choosing the right shade of gray.

In a world of continuously changing hues, this is easier said than done. Management today is a complex game where applying the "right" formula or following "correct" guidelines is no guarantee for winning.

Learning on the job

My own take on this issue is that managers must first learn how to "talk the walk" (learn by doing) before they are asked to "walk the talk" (creatively apply what they have learned).

But first, they must be taught how to be effective learners from experience. They must be able to make sense of the strange and unexpected things that they encounter on the job.

Learning on the job requires more cognitive and judgmental skills than managers learn in the classroom and in seminar presentations.

These skills require a good deal of exposure to the conceptual underpinnings of managerial choice. Regrettably, most of us—including some professors of management—have a natural aversion to things conceptual or theoretical.

The challenge to management developers is do help managers overcome this unfounded fear. This can be done in part by introducing concepts in the context of issues and situations familiar to managers, by using metaphors instead of numerical examples, and by avoiding esoteric jargon, cryptic formulas and fancy graphics.

(The article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The author is an active academic and a knowledge management consultant. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph)

MOVEMENT

ABS-CBN has new CMO

ABS-CBN BROADCASTING CORP. HAS RECENTLY announced the appointment of Carmencita "Menchi" Orlina as vice president and chief marketing officer (CMO) of ABS-CBN Global Ltd. The newly created job entails leading and coaching Global's international marketing groups and likewise developing and executing strategic business plans.

Supported by more than 20 years of combined general management, marketing, and sales management experience encompassing a steady progression of escalating accomplishments and responsibilities, Orlina is deemed to be truly apt for the position. The newest Kapamilya has done consumer marketing research with Philippine companies, as well as with a New York-based research agency.

In addition to this, the University of the Philippines alumna was formerly the country director for the Philippines and VP for the Asia Pacific Region's Inbound Business of Western Union Financial Services (HK) Ltd. Orlina also worked for Pfizer, in which she mainly handled marketing and sales of consumer healthcare and pharmaceutical products.

Riding the momentum train

A LEADER'S WAY

John C. Maxwell

ALBERT EINSTEIN ONCE MADE A wonderful point about his theory of relativity: He only came up with it once, but it kept him in pipe tobacco for years.

Einstein realized what more leaders need to discover: that a major breakthrough can launch an organization from good to great, so great leaders always push for that breakthrough.

Breakthroughs occur when we continually:

1. Meet needs (which allows us to stay in the arena);

2. Improve ourselves and our team; and,

3. Succeed. It's a fact that there is no success like success.

Pushing for a breakthrough generates a leader's best friend—momentum. Momentum makes your work or your mission easier to accomplish than anything else.

I often tell leaders that momentum is worth three staff members. In fact, if some leaders would get rid of the right three staff members, they might instantly get some momentum.

Momentum is the great exaggerator for both the good and the bad. When you have no momentum, things look worse than they really are. And when you have momentum, it makes things look better than they ever seemed to be.

So you've got to push for the breakthrough—from build-up to breakthrough, from good to great. Good is build-up; great is breakthrough.

But there's a temptation that comes with a breakthrough and the momentum that comes with it—the temptation to ease up and celebrate the victory. You just kind of want to sit back and say, "Wow! Aren't we good?"

It just feels good to know you've achieved something. And while it's OK to celebrate the touchdowns, we have to remember that the next play in the game just might get us beat.

In fact, dancing in the end zone is exactly the opposite of what you should do. When you have a breakthrough, that's when you spend more time, more energy and more money.

Once you have that ball rolling, the compounding effect is so huge you don't ever want that ball to stop.

Instead, the time to ease up is when things have slowed down. When you don't have momentum and when you don't have a breakthrough—when the train already has stopped—get off and take a rest. You weren't going anywhere anyway!

But once the train gets going again, don't get off. When you've got momentum and the breakthrough, it's dangerous to jump off. You could hurt yourself. You could hurt your organization.

So if you want to go from good leadership to great leadership, keep pushing toward a breakthrough. And when momentum arrives, either because you are near the goal or because you've broken through, don't ease up. That's when you push the pedal to the metal.

(For information on John Maxwell's in-house or public leadership or teamwork workshops, please email us at maxwell@inspire.ph or call 813-2732/03 and ask for Gina. Text MAXWELL ON to 4632 (Smart) to get daily SMS leadership insights from John Maxwell. God bless!)

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Japan blitz paying off

THE MARKETING BLITZ BEING conducted in Japan by the Philippine government is paying off, bringing in 36,589 Japanese tourists last September to top the country's foreign arrivals.

That number, according to the Department of Tourism, surpassed the 30,481 arrivals from Korea and the 30,040 from the United States, and helped push the January-September total to 1,907,405 for a 13.1 percent increase over the 1,685,853 posted in the same period last year.

Japan used to be the Philippines' second leading source of tourists next to the United States, but was overtaken by arrivals from Korea in recent months.

This time, however, Japan is fast catching up, with its January-September 2005 tally of 313,101 now within striking distance to Korea's 349,093 and the US' 392,706.

In the same nine-month period last year, Japan ranked second with total arrivals of 290,592 as it trailed the US with 352,132.

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Seeing value in supporting an unprofitable venture

By Fran Katigbak

RAFAEL Suarez II FRAN KATIGBAK

BUSINESSMAN RAFAEL SUAREZ II saw the value of supporting the cash-strapped 23rd Southeast Asian Games, even if the venture would likely be unprofitable.

Suarez and Sons Inc., an offshoot of the metal arts and jewelry company that Rafael's father and uncle opened in 1953, designed and produced over 3,000 medals and about 7,000 commemorative coins for the SEAG slated here on Nov. 27 to Dec. 5.

This is the second time for the Suarezes who were also commissioned to produce medals for the 1991 edition of the Games held in the country.

With SEAG organizers beset with financial problems, however, the company offered to do the medals for a small fee, settling for mileage and exposure instead of profit.

One of three second-generation heirs to the family trade, Rafael is familiar with managing the business through hard times.

Then a newlywed, Rafael founded Suarez and Sons Inc. in 1985, which was a time of crisis following the assassination of Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr.

"Everything was hard to sell back then," Rafael says about starting the company.

"Selling became a work of art because it's [about] how you convince your customers or how creative you are [in trying] to make a sale," he says.

He also recognizes that business is seasonal.

Orders come in only when the need arises, such as corporate functions, anniversaries, graduations, the holidays and other special events.

There is no production on certain months and, during such periods, the company takes the opportunity to research, study trends, build up the inventory of the needs of regular customers, and develop new products and services.

Rafael is keen on observing trends and acquiring the necessary technology from sources like Germany, Taiwan, Canada and the US to remain competitive.

"There are changes every day, anywhere in the world, so it's a matter of being creative and applying new discoveries to your product," says the craftsman-entrepreneur.

The company has to develop ways of giving what customers need based on their budget without sacrificing quality and craftsmanship, he adds.

Suarez and Sons has a variety of products such as nameplates in different metals, trophies, plaques, souvenirs, company giveaways, and school and office jewelry.

The metal arts company has even created unique products like Coca-Cola's brass crown cap, Avon's centennial anniversary liberty bells, and a single 24-karat gold coin worth half a million pesos.

Rafael believes Suarez and Sons can penetrate foreign markets just as its foreign counterparts have entered the local market.

Right now the company, which has headquarters in Manila and Cebu, exports products to the US and some parts of Europe.

"We could look for a business partner [abroad]," says Rafael about expansion plans.

"It would be better though, like with big companies, to look for local partners in the area. Later on, when we have learned the ins and outs of the country, we could buy out the partners."

But it all starts with just one client who could recommend your product to another, he says.

Foreseeing the market, he says, helped Suarez and Sons survive two decades.

"This business is more of how you create the demand, especially when there's no demand and people would rather keep their money."

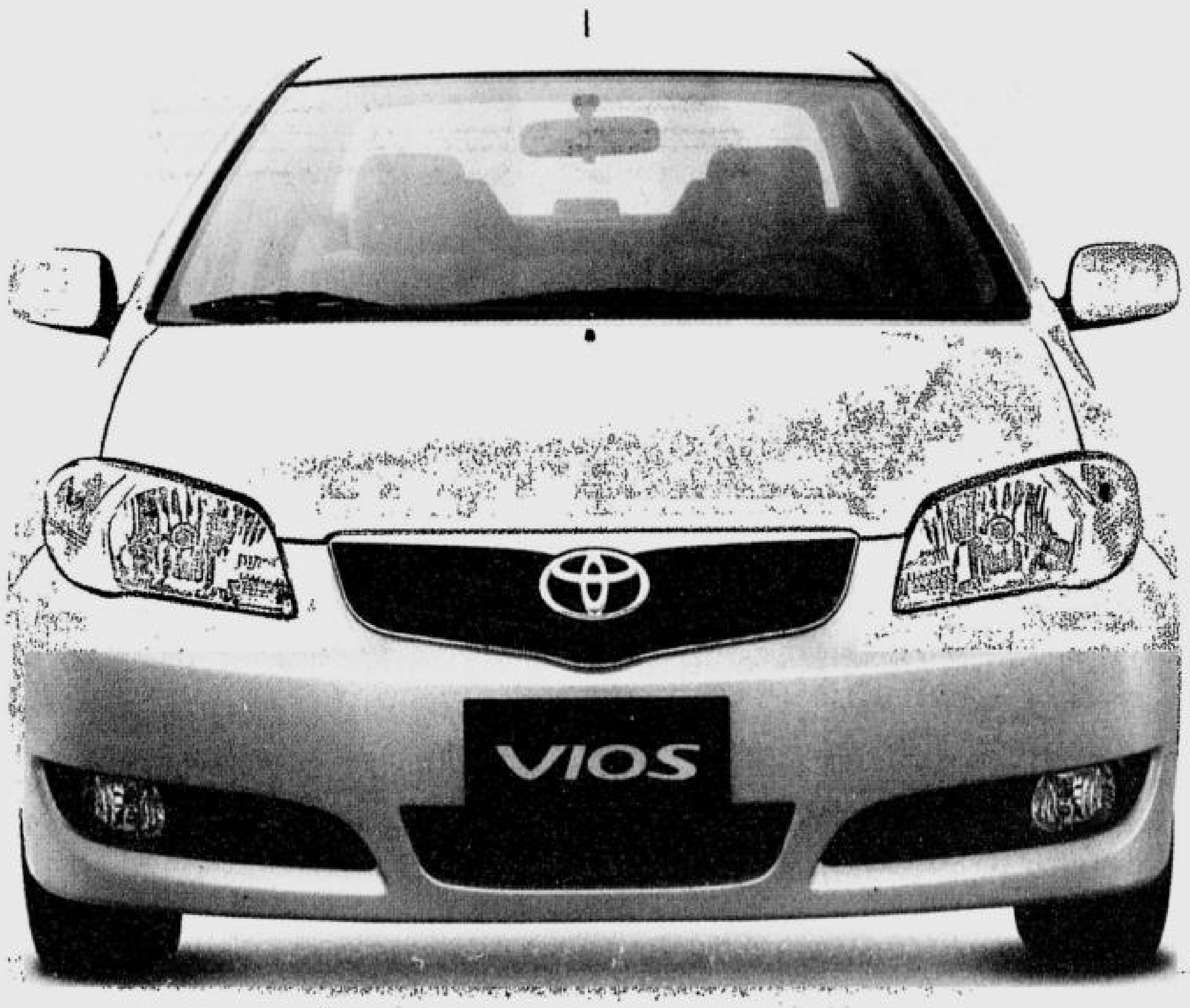
Perhaps it is an advantage that the products of the business serve as promotional tools.

A corporate pin on a customer, or a SEAG medal worn by an athlete, is a form of advertising for the company.

"In this business, you have to be a craftsman and have the eye for [beauty]," says Rafael. "These are qualities you need to come out with a really nice product, something presentable and competitive."

VVT-i

Passion



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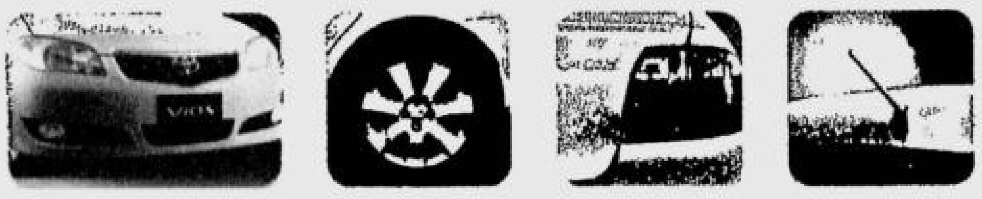

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Carcar's pride of place shines through Kabkaban feast

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

CEBU'S premier heritage town pulsated with tradition during Sunday's Kabkaban Festival in Carcar.

The history of Kabkaban parallels the rise of heritage awareness in Carcar.

The local affiliate of the Heritage Conservation Society, the Carcar Heritage Conservation Society (CHCS), has been working for years to revive interest in the special heritage of the town.

They believed a special event could refocus attention on the town's vanishing heritage, so they solicited funds and organized the first Kabkaban Festival in 2000.

Succeeding festivals since were modest, parallel with CHCS's slow progress in raising local-heritage awareness. It took a long time for locals to believe their town's heritage was unique not only to Cebu but to the Philippines as well. The residents and local government had other development ideas for the town. Preservation was not on their agenda.

Since 2000, CHCS and the local government struggled with conflicting heritage visions. The conflict ended this year when Cebu Gov. Gwen Garcia guided both sides toward unifying their vision to recognize and preserve their heritage.

The first step taken was to declare Carcar a heritage town.

The provincial and local governments, together with CHCS, sealed their support and committed to preserve the town heritage by passing an ordinance, the first such in Cebu. It was signed just a few weeks before this year's Kabkaban.

With the passing of the ordinance, private-public agreement, essential to the success of heritage projects, was finally attained.

The provincial and local governments provided generous subsidies to underwrite this year's festival and asked CHCS members to plan and organize the 2005 festival.

Kabkaban Festival this year signaled the start of cooperation of all sectors to preserve heritage in Carcar. There was much to celebrate.

The day kicked off with a sale of artworks by Carcaranon and Cebuano artists, who donated their proceeds to fund CHCS projects.

Romulo Galicano, a nationally acclaimed award-winning artist born

CARCAR'S/C2

Marian procession on Dec. 3

THE 26TH GRAND MARIAN Procession of the Cofradia de la Inmaculada Concepcion Foundation will be preceded by Masses at 5:30 p.m. on Nov. 30-Dec. 2 at the Shrine of Jesus the Divine Teacher in Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila in Intramuros.

On Dec. 3, 10 a.m., the First Communicants Mass will take place at the Basilica of San Lorenzo Ruiz in Binondo, Manila.

Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales will preside over the concelebrated Hermanos Mayores Mass on Dec. 4, 2 p.m., at the Manila Cathedral in Intramuros, before the Grand Marian Procession scheduled to begin at 4 p.m.

This is an annual event led by Cofradia founding chair Imelda Cojuangco in cooperation with the Intramuros Administration headed by Dominador Ferrer Jr. and the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

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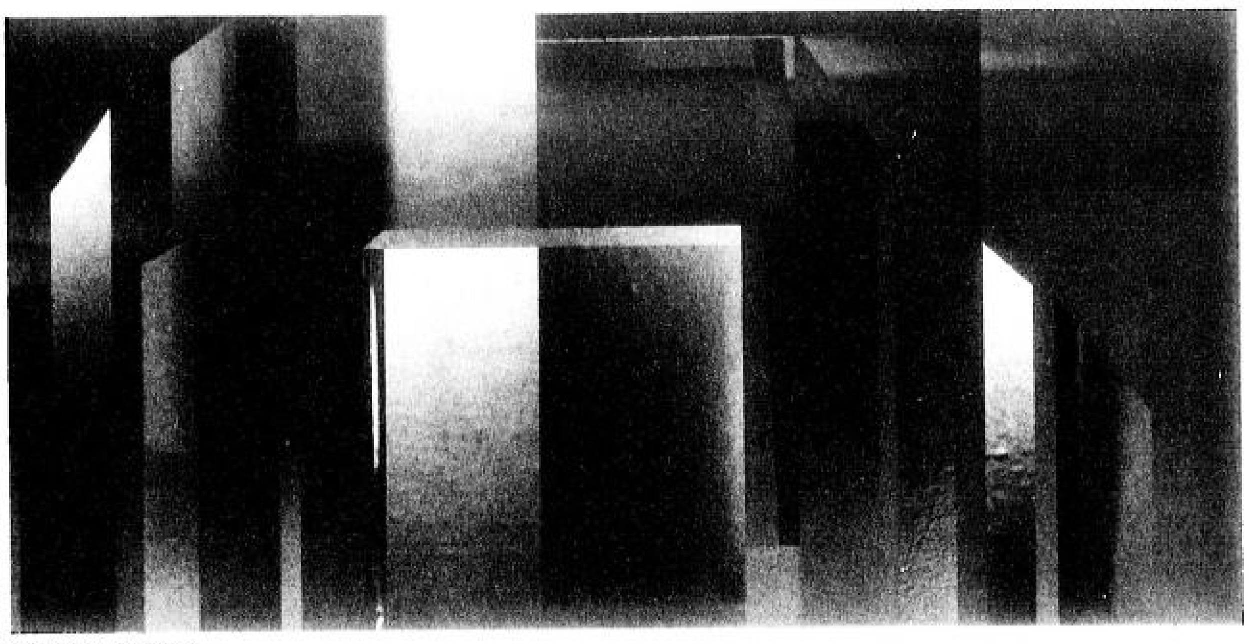


"PERSPECTIVE"

Jaime Zobel pays tribute to modernist pioneer Fernando Zobel

IN HIS LATEST EXHIBIT, JAIME Zobel pays tribute to his uncle and mentor, artist Fernando Zobel.

The show will feature over 20 photographic artworks.

Jaime Zobel acknowledges the senior Zobel as his strongest influence. He was in attendance when Fernando taught a course in art appreciation at the Ateneo in the 1950s.

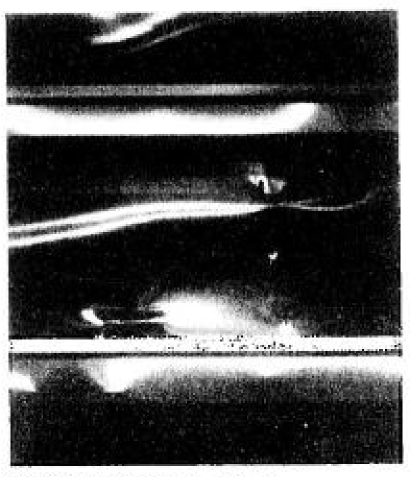
"Fernando Zobel has been and is my mentor and inspiration of the style that I now call my own. Color, composition and form are part of this inspiration," he declares.

The two artists share an understanding of the soft lyricism of light.

Light is often ignored. Still, there are those who see past the exterior gloss of the world and into the inner workings of nature.

As a leading art photographer, Zobel has produced an expressive body of work. His exploration of light—its buoyancy and latent darkness—is both accessible and intriguing.

In notes accompanying the 2003 exhibit "Ode to Light," he says: "[I use] light not as an accomplice, but as a photographic theme. I do with light what the Impressionists did—I paint with it. It bestows the familiar with an expressive quality—silent, yet quite vibrant—that results in the revelations and hues, which in turn project different energies and subtleties."



"METALLIC Reflection"

Zobel seems acquainted with the secrets of light. His camera lens can capture a split-second occurrence of reflection or confession, transforming what is ordinary into extraordinary, what is nondescript into a framed moment of ricocheting moods.

In his remarks at the opening of the exhibit in Madrid, he confesses: "Light is important to me because it embraces both physical and spiritual levels of being. My most profound moments of gratitude have happened at that first hour when the night ends and the morning light slides on my skin, giving me a luminous sense of the small space I take up in this strange and vast universe."

Better known in business as the chairman of Ayala, one of the oldest and largest business houses in the Philippines, Zobel has also been an art photographer for the past 30 years.

He is the first Filipino amateur photographer to be conferred a Licentiate by the Royal Photographic Society. He has received commendations from the French and Spanish governments for his contributions to art and culture.

For "Journeys with Light," Zobel gathers works from different stages of his artistic life, with a few prints that will be available for public viewing for the first time.

The exhibit opens on Dec. 1 in the 3/F gallery of Ayala Museum in Makati City.

The opening will coincide with the launch of the book "Journeys with Light: The Vision of Jaime Zobel." A collaboration of Zobel and writer Jose "Butch" Dalisay, the book documents Zobel's works and exhibitions and chronicles his 28-year career as visual artist and photographer.

The book will be available at Filipinas Heritage Library and Ayala Museum.

Carcar's pride of place sl

From page C1

in Carcar, donated a major oil painting for auction which raised over P260,000 for the CHCS.

But it was Carcar itself that was on display that day.

Manny Castro, Jerry Alfafara and Zarah Castro, Carcar's leading heritage advocates, threw open the doors to their magnificent Spanish colonial homes, inviting everyone to see for themselves why the Carcar Heritage Conservation Society is determined to save the treasures of the town.

Their houses never looked as good as they did that day, each coming through with a proud sheen I had never seen before.

Carcar's treasures go beyond the town's colonial homes, church and *convento*. Its *calado* architecture from the 1920s is unsurpassed in the country. The wooden façades of the Carcar Dispensary and Saint Catherine's Academy have carved fretwork so delicate it seems like they could flutter with the breeze like fragile heirloom lace.

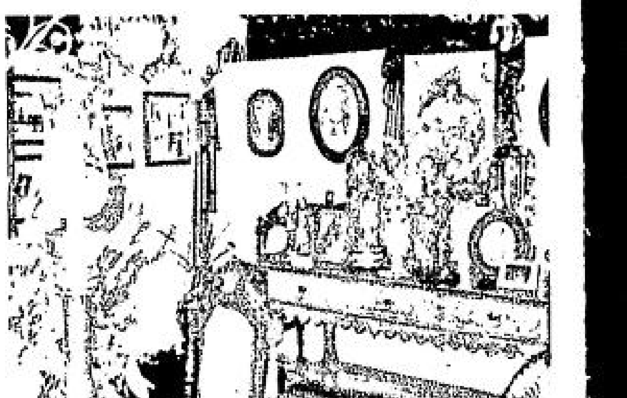
Wooden houses from the unappreciated post-war era still stand in Carcar streets, a type of architecture so descriptive of life during that forgotten period of our national history which is sadly dismissed by many as not of heritage quality.

A wonderful round kiosk from the American period, one of the best surviving examples of its genre in the country, valiantly stands at the center of the Carcar Rotunda, whose pride of place is now totally stolen by offending super large-scale billboards.

The Kabkaban parade, choreographed by the award-winning CHCS member and 2005 festival organizer, Val Sandiego, wound its way from the

BEST seats for viewing the parade aere definitely along the wide windows of the many *bahay na bato* which still stand along the narrow streets of the town.

CHOREOGRAPHED by award-winning Val Sandiego of the Carcar Heritage Conservation Society, young Carcaranons dance in the streets in praise of the Carcar pomelo, coveted all over Cebu for its sweetness.



THE BALAY na Tisa, lovingly restored by its owners, is one of the resplendent Carcar houses that open its doors to the public for the Kabkaban Festival.

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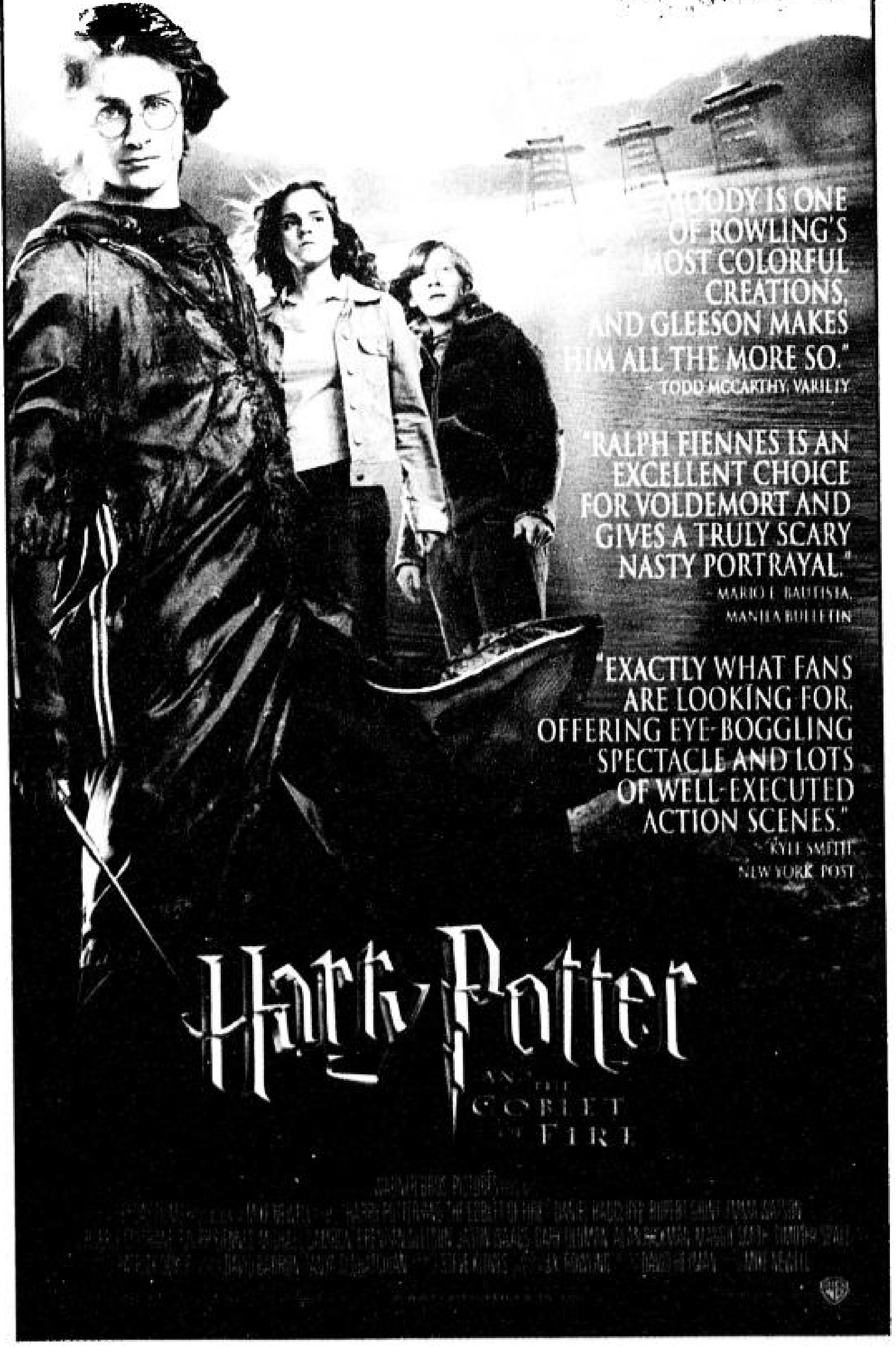

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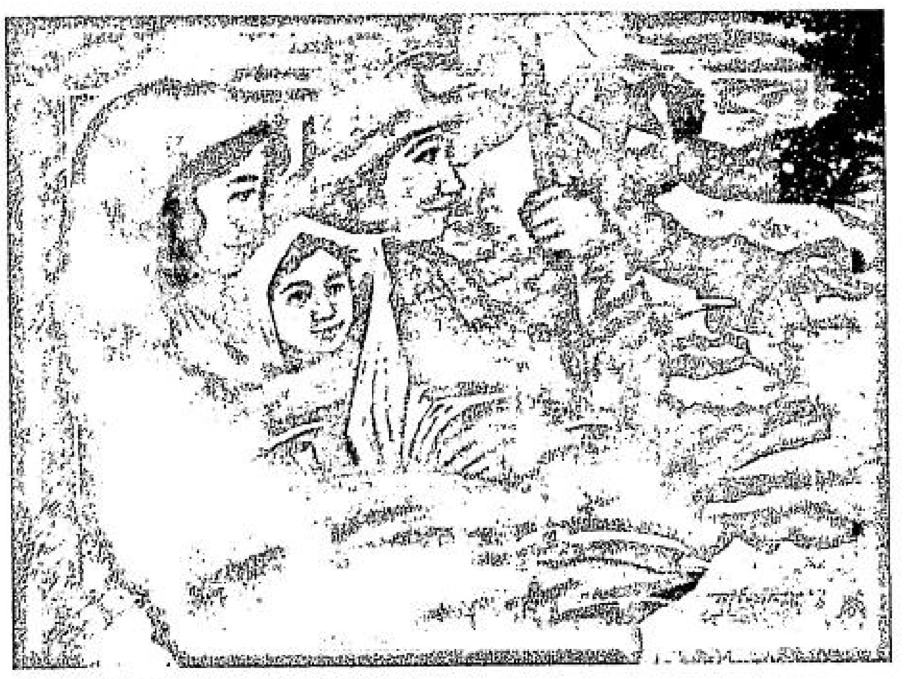


"TANGLAW," by Wilfredo Offemaria

Yuletide art at Gallery Nine

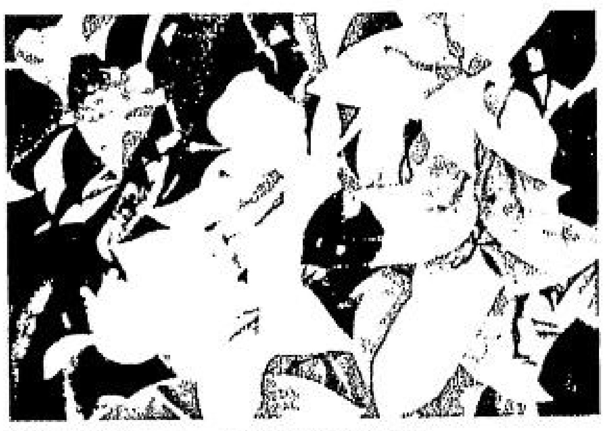
THE 12 ART WORKS that grace the Christmas cards of the Young Artists' Fund Project (YAFP) will be exhibited at Gallery Nine (L/4, Bldg. A, SM Megamall) starting tomorrow.

YAFP encourages private institutions to support the arts, particularly new talents. To raise funds, it issues Christmas cards highlighting the artworks of 12 selected artists.

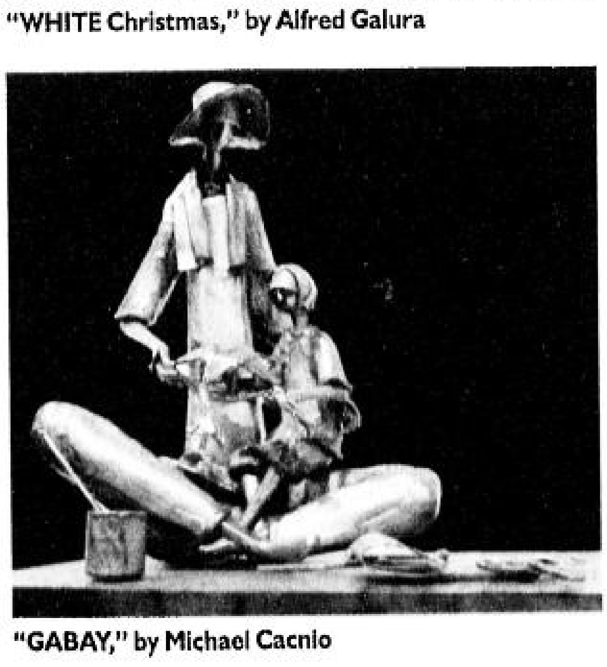
Each piece, upon acquisition by a corporate sponsor, comes with 300 pieces of the Christmas card bearing the image of the work. The cards are also available by bulk order.

The 12 artists this year are Fatima Antonio, Aris Bagtas, Yveese Belen, Michael Cacnio, Salvador Ching, Farley del Rosario, Romeo Forbes, Alfred Galura, Wilfredo Offemaria, Bin Samonte, Jef Samonte, and Rex Tatlonghari.

Call 6877302.



"WHITE Christmas," by Alfred Galura



"GABAY," by Michael Cacnio

Esquillo at West, Antipolo artists

VISUAL ARTS

ALFRED ESQUILLO IS HOLDING "AUTOTHEATER in West Gallery at Megamall. The show consists of Esquillo's characteristic large-scale ultra-realistic works reeking of satire and social commentary. Esquillo, a product of the College of Fine Arts and Design of the University of Santo Tomas, was the first Filipino grand-prize winner of the Philip Morris Asean Awards. Cal 6341284.

ANTONIO Bandalan will hold "A Mirror of Nature" on Nov. 26-Dec. 5 in Gallery Y in Megamall Bandalan's flowers and trees are untouched by motion, suggesting pensiveness. The works are evocations of solitude and reflection. Call 6342704.

FERNANDO B. SENA'S one-man show in the gallery of National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) BIR Road, Quezon City, Dec. 5-20, presents acrylic and oil paintings of nature, landscapes and seascapes. Call 3762196.

"DULA sa Lapuk," a traveling exhibit of terra-cotta sculptures and installations, will run on Dec. 15-Jan. 15, 2006, at the Pasilyo Victorio Edades, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd., Pasay City. Participating artists include Nelia Lungay, Mark Valenzuela, Dannie Sollesta and Kitty Taniguchi.

ARNEL Mirasol offers oil-painting courses for both beginners and advance students. Included in the beginners' oil painting course are lessons on still life, seascape and landscape painting. The advance painting course covers basic portraiture and painting using the hyperrealist composition and brush techniques of Andrew Wyeth and Salvador Dali. Sessions fo both beginners and advance classes will start Dec. 3, Saturdays and Sundays, 2-5 p.m., at 9 Arambulo St., BF Homes Parañaque. Call 2310193 or 0921-5113064.

ART IS-KOOL, aired at 10:30 a.m. every Saturda on ABC 5, teaches kids to turn scrap into art. The program has also become a vehicle for teaching kids about recycling and caring for the environment. The children's art show aims to make art fun and accessible to kids.

IAN Quirante mounts his third one-man show until Dec. 5 in the Drawing Room, G/F, Metrostar

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

hines through Kabkaban feast

THE PRE-WAR Carcar Dispensary covered with carved fretwork is one of the prettiest wooden structures in the country.

Carcaranons know how to throw a heritage party

hilltop church to the town below.

Carcar youth danced tirelessly through the streets to the rhythm of drums and loud brass bands, followed by *barangay* members who walked behind colorful floats, waving and calling out to their friends who either lined the sidewalks or watched from windows.

It was a festival for the townspeople. It was a family event without the tourist polish the major festivals somehow put on in their later years. Everyone was simply having a grand time that day.

. The festival organizers vowed to keep the spirit of the festival alive as an event expressing Carcar culture, rather than degenerating into a dance competition like today's commercialized Sinulog Festival of Cebu City.

. And the festival was superb. All of the participants danced in the streets with such gusto, joined by spectators whenever they could. It was in no way a well-rehearsed polished performance seen in most of the institutionalized fiestas in the country.

Kabkaban came through with authentic Carcar flavor, reinforcing local identity so well you could see the Carcaranons glow with pride.

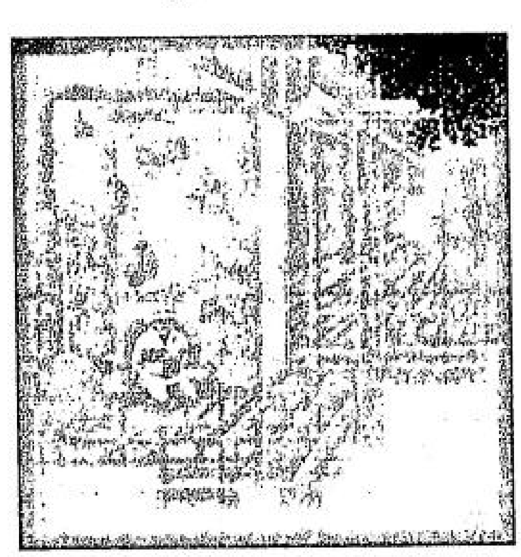
It was so much fun that I am definitely going back next year.

Heritage watch

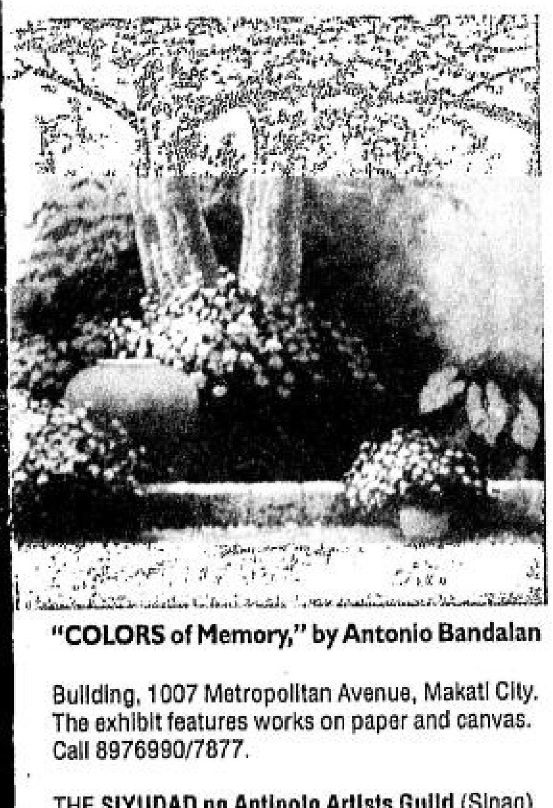
Take a look at the street lamps that have recently sprouted on the Pasay side of Roxas Boulevard.

Feedback is welcome at afvillalon@hotmail.com

Bandalan at Y,
at Pasig Museum



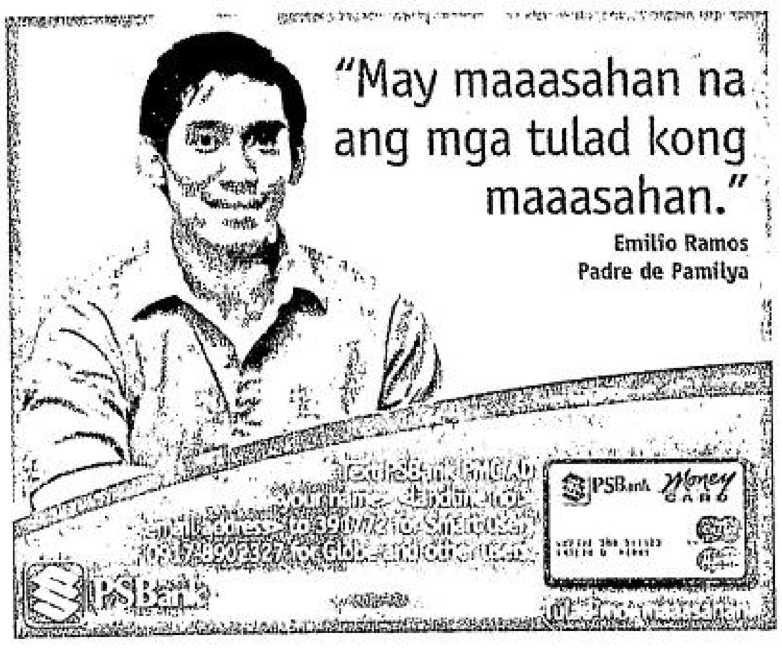
"SCAFFOLDING Haven," by Alfred Esquillo



"COLORS of Memory," by Antonio Bandalan

Building, 1007 Metropolitan Avenue, Makati City. The exhibit features works on paper and canvas. Call 8976990/7877.

THE **SIYUDAD ng Antipolo Artists Guild** (Sinag) will hold "Reflections" to oppose the destruction of Arroceros Forest Park by the Manila government. The group show will open on Dec. 3 at the Pasig City Museum. Participating artists are Mike Austria, Joseph Clavita, Zaldy Arbozo, Norlito Meimban, Armida Francisco, Leo Meneses, Genie Carlos, Vic Bachoco, Joel Cristobal, Andy Urag, Andy Pernia, Hendrix Pereyra, Mannix Arago, Tony Aragoncillo, Dodie Inlayo, Phed Gonzaga, Pedro Aralar, Gene Lisa, Susan Hassig, Darren Huertas, Oliver Oliveros, Ramon Caneza and Mond Gallanosa. Call 6961381 or 6786774. Visit www.pepsite.com.ph.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ROCKMOTO
Miggy (Chicosci) ICON WINNER
Cludad with the MotoRokr
Biboy (Quezo)
Mari Litonjua (right) Motorola Marketing Head
Ala (Imago)
Gabby (Urbandub)
Reg (Greyhoundz)
Raimund (Sandwich)
Patrick Aronson (left) (Motorola Country Manager)
Ebe (Sugarfree)
MOTOROLA and GLOBE Create ROKR Frenzy!

Last October 21, Motorola hosted the culminating event to their awesome gig series ROCK MO `TO. The final gig night was staged at the back theatre of THX and boasted powerhouse acts Imago, Sandwich, Urbandub, Greyhoundz, Chicosci, and Sugarfree. The front men (and woman) of these bands were all part of a text-in voting campaign to crown the country's first ever ROCK MO `TO Icon. The winning Icon and a lucky contest raffle winner will be flown to Sydney, Australia to catch the Foo Fighters live in concert.

The gig series and contest highlighted the fresh and cool Motorola handset, the ROKR E1. It's the first mobile phone with iTunes and is available exclusively at the Hub and Globe Telecom Business Centers. What's amazing is that you get 0% installment if you purchase the ROKR E1 with either a prepaid or postpaid kit! This rocking phone is the coveted prize of the contest's raffle winner, along with his all-expenses paid trip to the land down under.

That night, Chicosci's Miggy Chavez was announced the ROCK MO `TO Icon, and rightly so, as his performance effortlessly blew the audience away. But it was presumably a close win, as all the other acts proved to be worthy adversaries. All in all, ROCK MO `TO's final gig night was a compelling evening filled with remarkable Pinoy artistry and undeniable world-class talent.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

An artist too late

By Constantino C. Tejero

THE ARTIST CALLED SYM (initials of Sofronio Ylanan Mendoza) would seem to be an artist too late. He paints images that, despite the mastery of line and color and no matter how lovely they look, unfortunately look dated today.

Mentored on art basics by Cebuano painter Martino Abellana, known as the Amorsolo of the South, Sym was churning out Amorsoloesque pastorals when the master's work was being dismissed, if not entirely reviled, by the modernists.

He studied Fine Arts at the University of the East and University of Santo Tomas, and, with E. Aguilar Cruz, co-founded the Dimasalang Group of Artists in 1968. Meeting regularly in his apartment on Dimasalang Street in Sampaloc, Manila, it included Ibarra de la Rosa, Romulo Galicano, Andres Cristobal Cruz.

They were drawing largely from French Impressionism, when that art movement had had its heyday almost a century earlier. They were producing impressionistic still lifes, landscapes and genre pieces when the counterculture was brewing. Thus, fairly or unfairly, most of their efforts were consigned to Mabini art.

Now based in Canada, Sym has of late shifted his artistic style to that of Braque, Picasso, Juan Gris. He considers the artistic progression radical, never mind that Cubism is more than half a century old.

Witness his homecoming exhibit "A New Vision," 58 pieces in oil on canvas and pastel and charcoal on paper, presented by Crucible Gallery until Dec. 4 in the Art Center at the Artwalk, 4/L, Bldg. A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

These are mostly nudes and still lifes rendered in a festive interplay of cool and warm color tones, the realist figures broken up by overlapping and interfusing planes and grids so that in some pieces they appear abstracted.

This is cubism akin to stroboscopic photography. The imagery looks busy, evoking the fiesta scenes of Malang Santos and Manny Baldemor. The artist says his inspiration is the intricate multicolor *sarimanok* motif of Maranao art.

The still lifes are especially lovely. In pieces such as "Transparent Space," "Harmony in Green (with Cherries)," "Table Composition with Drapery," the multiple-exposure technique is particularly apt in conjuring a plenitude of fruits, flowers, jars, bottles.

We just can't understand why, in his effort to distance his work from the Cubists', Sym had to invent for it such ambiguous labels as "neocubism" and "neoclassical cubism" (is there such a thing—and if there is, what does it mean?).

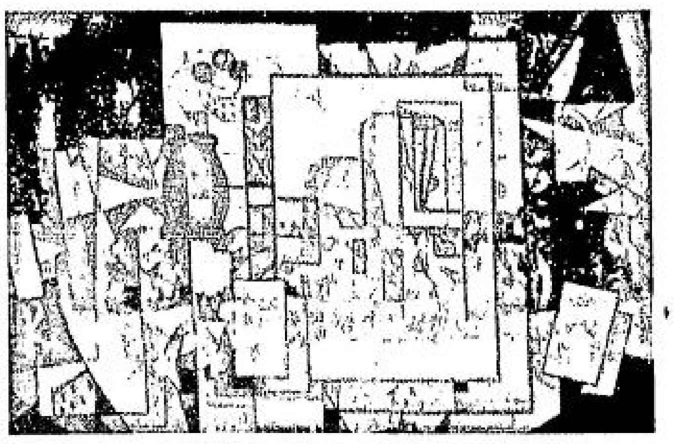
One difference of his work from Cubism, he says, is his figures' sense of movement. But we've seen that before in Duchamp's "Nude Descending a Staircase," haven't we?

Cubist and Futurist fragmentation—the dissection of image and space and the repetition of line and form—is employed precisely to simulate such sense of movement, as well as to approximate the experience of seeing the figure in the round, from every angle, as it were.

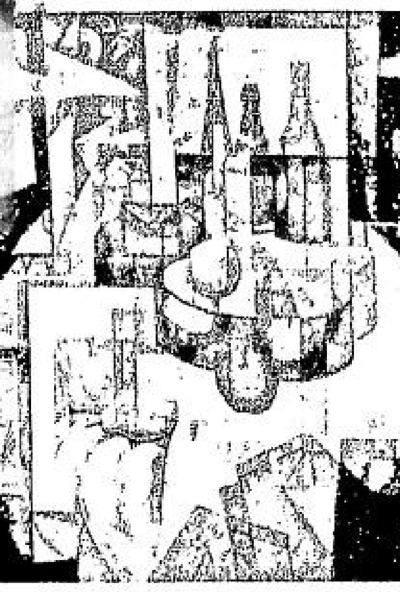
Sym may deny that his still life, for example, is compositionally close to Gris' or Braque's, although we can see that it is. What his brand of cubism is actually closer to is Transparent Cubism, which Manansala invented several decades ago.

What's more confounding, he describes his newfound modernist approach as "abstract art," apparently confusing cubism with abstraction. He comes upon modernist art as if it were still a revolutionary idea, a fresh discovery.

This is not questioning the merit of these works. We're only pointing out that they arrive on the scene rather late in the day. Although, of course, good art is always timeless.



"HARMONY in Green (with Cherries)." Far left: Sofronio Mendoza with his latest modernist work



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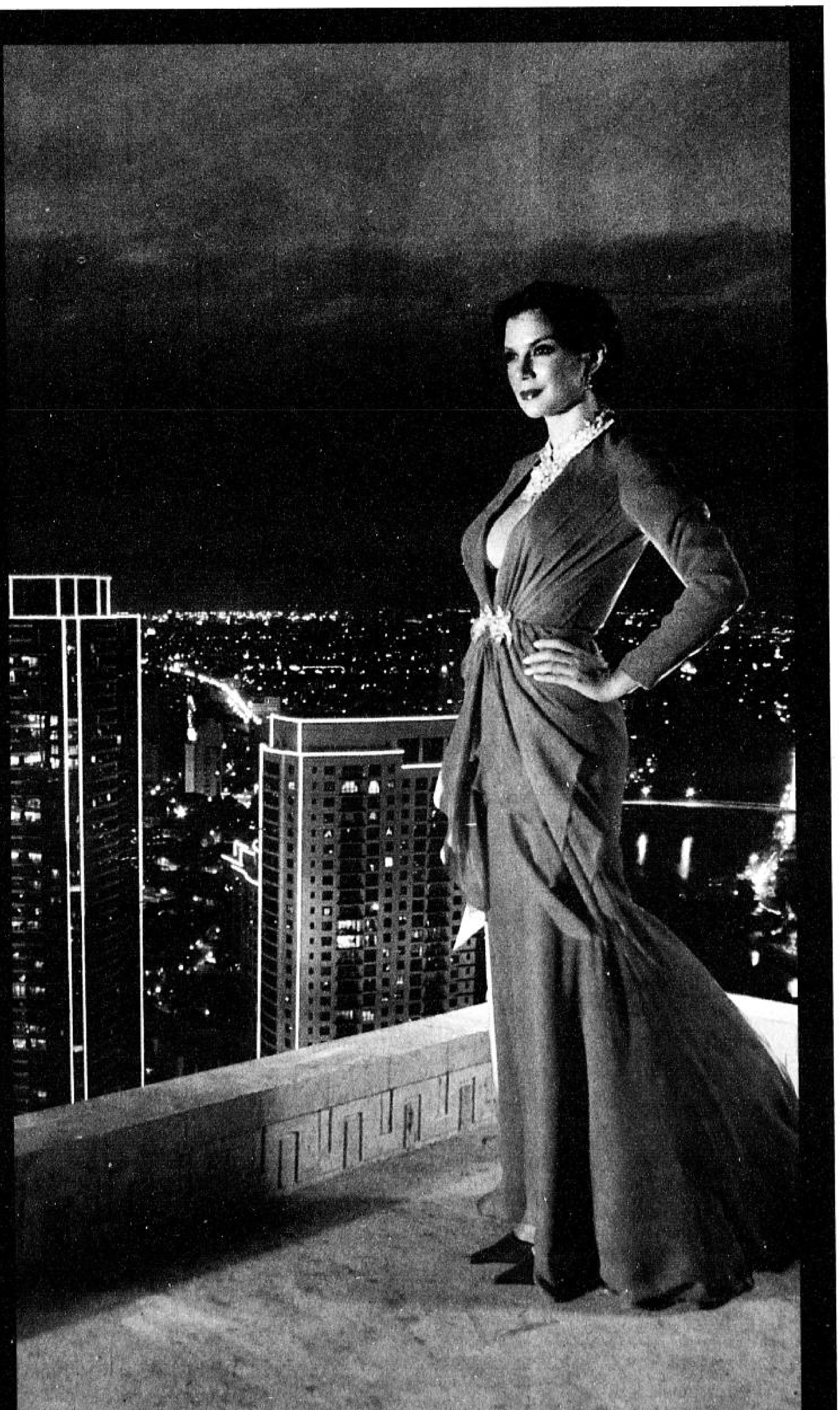

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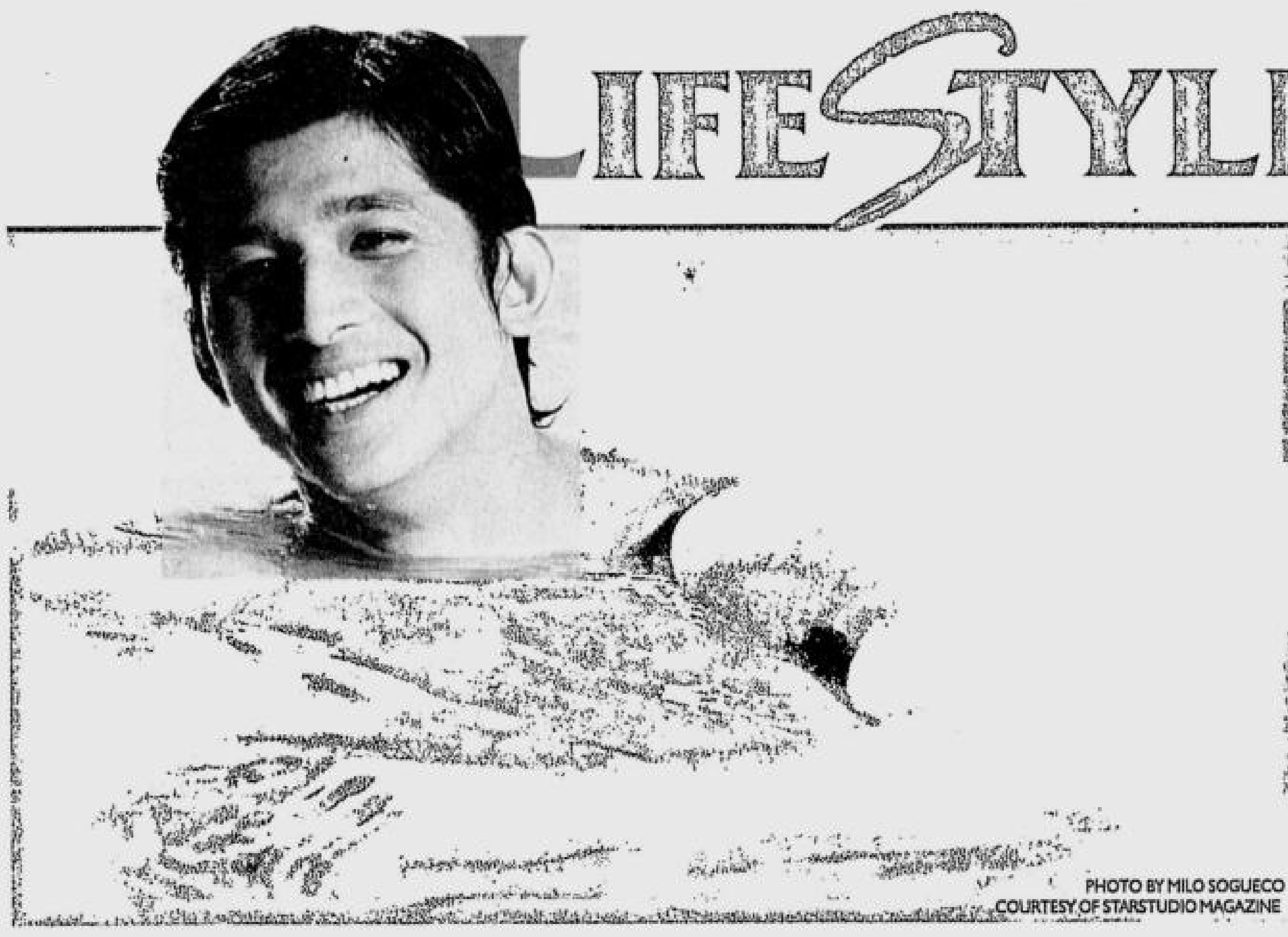
PHOTO BY MILO SOGUECO
COURTESY OF STARSTUDIO MAGAZINE

Model-actor J.R. Valentin is the gentle cop who becomes a boy's crush in the much-anticipated 'Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros'

An actor's first kiss

By Gibbs Cadiz

J.R. Valentin remembers the first time he was kissed by a guy.

"*Alam ko it* was coming, *pero nagulat pa rin ako*," he says, recalling the pivotal scene in the acclaimed film, "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros," where Maximo, a gay boy played by 13-year-old Nathan Lopez, steals a kiss from the policeman played by Valentin.

AN ACTOR'S/ D3

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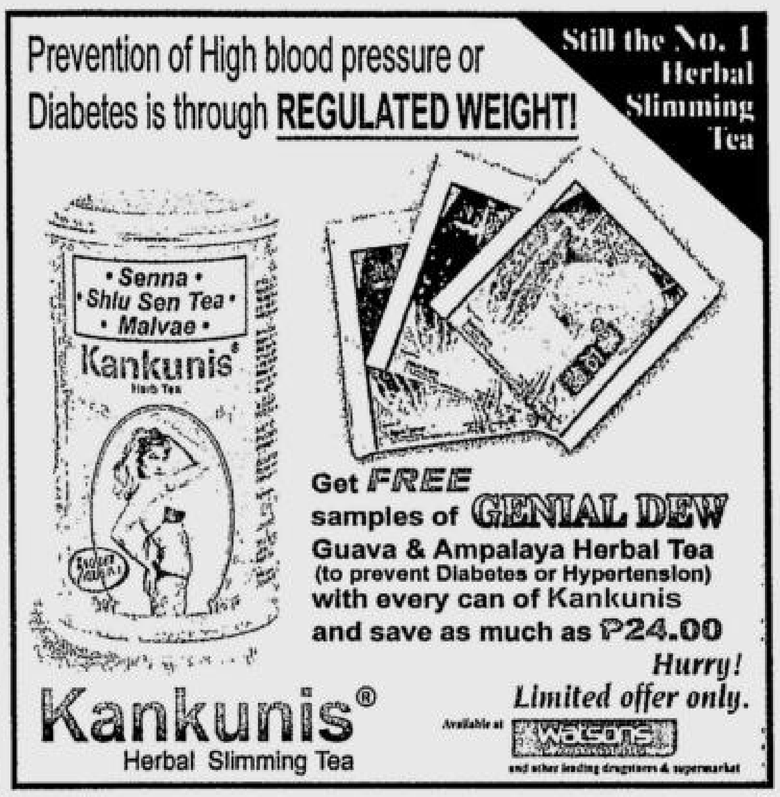
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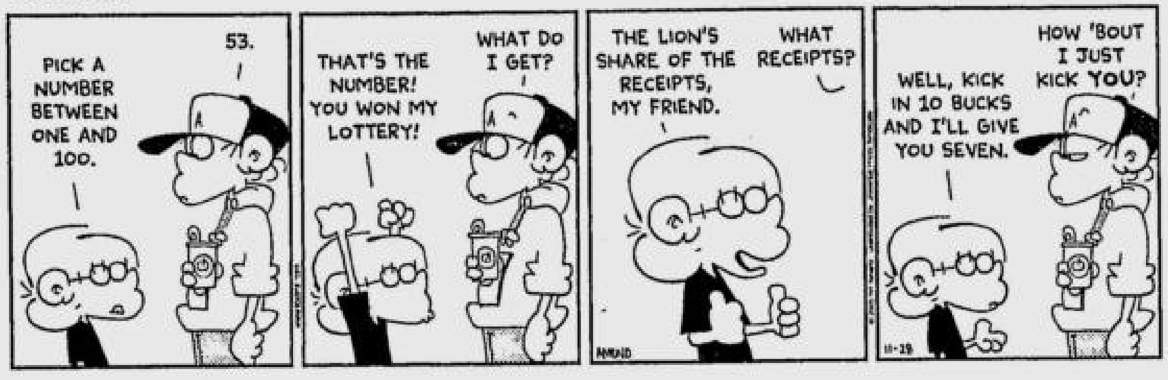
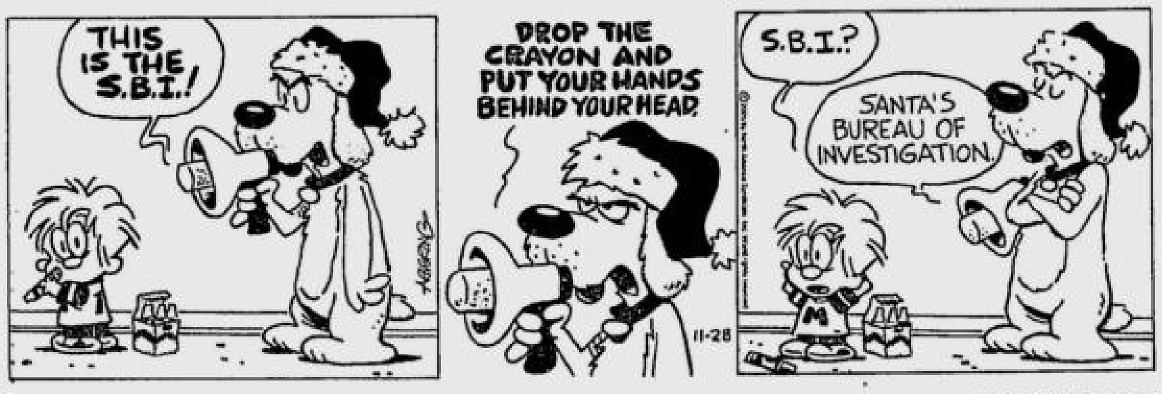
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


PICK A NUMBER BETWEEN ONE AND 100.
53.
THAT'S THE NUMBER! YOU WON MY LOTTERY!
WHAT DO I GET?
THE LION'S SHARE OF THE RECEIPTS, MY FRIEND.
WHAT RECEIPTS?
WELL, KICK IN 10 BUCKS AND I'LL GIVE YOU SEVEN.
HOW 'BOUT I JUST KICK YOU?
11-28

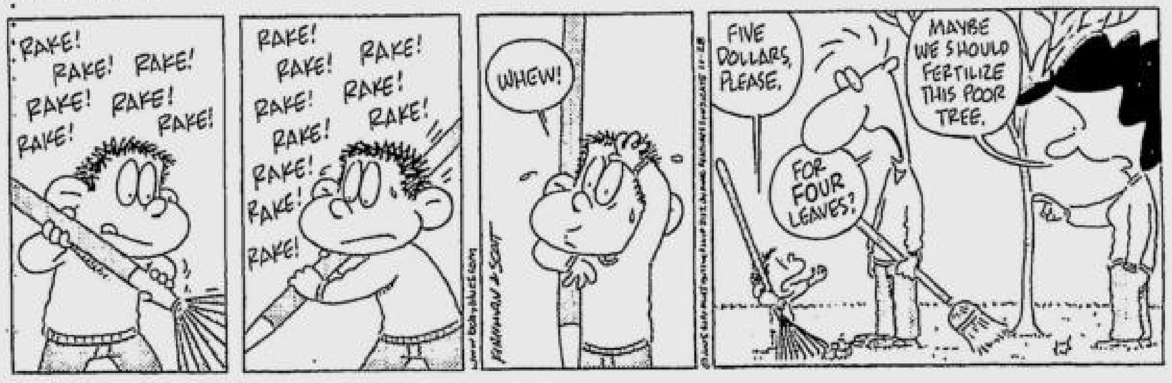
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


THIS IS THE S.B.I.!
DROP THE CRAYON AND PUT YOUR HANDS BEHIND YOUR HEAD.
S.B.I.?
SANTA'S BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION.
11-28

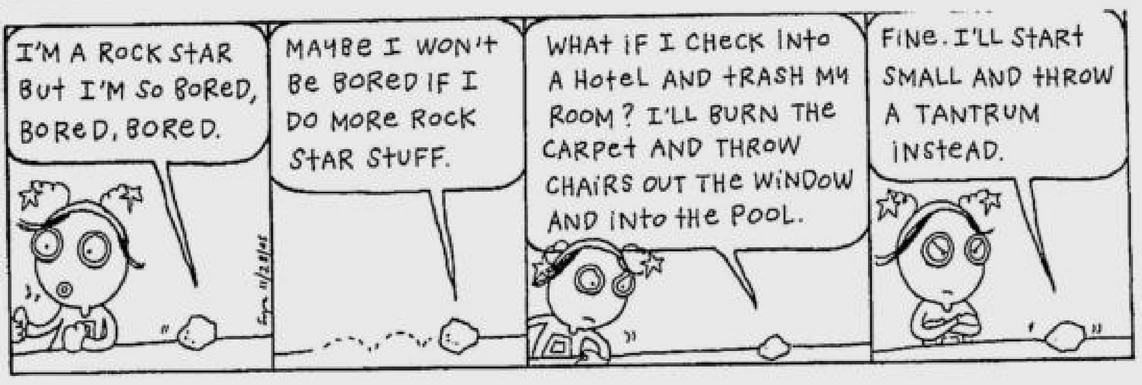
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


RAKE! RAKE! RAKE! RAKE! RAKE! RAKE! RAKE!
RAKE! RAKE! RAKE! RAKE! RAKE! RAKE! RAKE! RAKE! RAKE!
WHEW!
FIVE DOLLARS, PLEASE.
FOR FOUR LEAVES?
MAYBE WE SHOULD FERTILIZE THIS POOR TREE.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


I'M A ROCK STAR BUT I'M SO BORED, BORED, BORED.
MAYBE I WON'T BE BORED IF I DO MORE ROCK STAR STUFF.
WHAT IF I CHECK INTO A HOTEL AND TRASH MY ROOM? I'LL BURN THE CARPET AND THROW CHAIRS OUT THE WINDOW AND INTO THE POOL.
FINE. I'LL START SMALL AND THROW A TANTRUM INSTEAD.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are definitely an independent thinker. You boldly march to your own drummer. You strive for honesty at all costs. You have charm, intelligence and wit. You seek change in your life, in large measure because you have a strong sense of romance and adventure. The year ahead focuses primarily on your closest partnerships and relationships.

Birthdate of: Jon Stewart, TV host; Scarlett Pomers, actress; Judd Nelson, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You might feel upset by someone's sudden outburst connected with politics or religion. In turn, it could make you have a strong reaction either for or against something.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Watch your money and guard your possessions. You could find something today, but you could also lose it. Things are extremely unpredictable!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Sudden arguments might erupt with partners and loved ones today. People are uptight and unpredictable. It feels like there's almost a kind of increased electricity in the air!

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Your job will probably be interrupted by something surprising today. Power outages, computer crashes and mechanical failures might create delays and stoppages. Some kind of hiccup occurs.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Parents must be extra-vigilant with children. This is definitely an accident-prone day. Romantic liaisons are also subject to upheavals and unexpected events. Sporting events take a surprising turn.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Nothing is steady and even at home and with the family today. People are rebellious and impatient. Tension is everywhere. Appliances might break down; power outages are possible.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You feel a bit wild and reckless today. Therefore, take a moment to think before you speak. Be extra-careful when driving or walking. Try to be patient and diplomatic.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Financial matters are up for grabs today. Take precautions against impulse spending. (Believe me—you're tempted!) Try to take things one step at a time. Guard your money and possessions.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You're definitely subject to sudden upsets in behavior today. This could be just an internal reaction to something, or it could be your reaction to external events. Remain as calm as possible.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): It's easy to feel nervous about something today. Don't worry; this feeling passes quickly. Interruptions when dealing with the government or other agencies are perplexing.

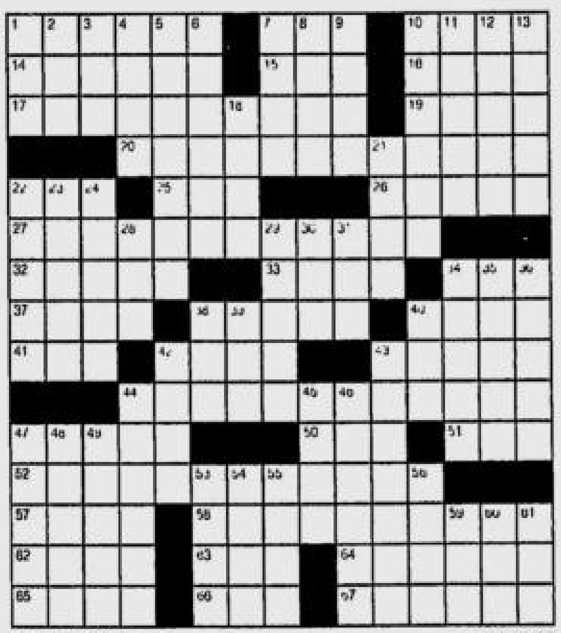
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You might meet someone quite bizarre today. Or a friend might do something unusual. People aren't boring today, but they are certainly independent and rebellious.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Be patient with VIPs, parents and authority figures in your life. It's all too easy to fly off the handle. But this serves no purpose. Mellow out. Anger only makes everyone miserable, including you.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Type of cat or goat
7 Gallivant
10 Sailboat's requirement
14 Make numb
15 Acetylene starter?
16 Skillfully
17 Extremely tasty
19 Liner, e.g.
20 Military base
22 Delivery service's letters
25 Island chain?
26 Made public
27 Building base
32 Nice love?
33 Social standing
34 __-Mart
37 Clothing
38 Fair-haired
40 Bamako's country
41 Guinness Book suffix
42 Way to go
43 Punctuation mark
44 Snidely base
47 Set deeply
50 S. Hemisphere nation
51 Gabor half-sister?
52 Baseball base
57 To boot
58 Unreasonable
62 Samson's pride
63 Zadora of "Hairspray"
64 Undergo a genetic change
65 Just
66 Undercover agent
67 Overacted

DOWN
1 Use a calculator
2 Word before an old name
3 Four qts.
4 Lyrical poems
5 Change hues
6 Buck topper
7 Mongolian desert
8 Wheel shaft
9 Beauty salon specialist
10 Five iron, once
11 Loathe
12 Ooze
13 Keyed in
18 Mine entrance
21 Plunder
22 Wordsmith's concern
23 Mountain lions
24 Gracious loser
28 London watering hole
29 Eggs on
30 Woosnam or Fleming
31 Consummation
34 Ballroom dance
35 Lotion botanicals
36 Blair or Evans
38 Python relative
39 Multi-computer syst.
40 Miss Piggy's word
42 Overhaul
43 Skull
44 Computer capacity
45 Indonesian boat
46 Introspective query
47 Sun Valley state
48 La Scala city
49 Pesto herb
53 Little drinks
54 Problem with a tap
55 Talk to God
56 Oz pooch
59 __ "King" Cole
60 Swallowed
61 __ Zeppelin



By Barry Silk
McLean, VA

11/28/05

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

W	A	I	S	T	S	■	S	E	V	E	R	E	S	T
I	N	D	I	R	A	■	E	N	A	M	E	L	E	R
S	T	E	P	I	N	■	A	S	T	U	T	E	L	Y
P	E	E	P	E	D	■	B	U	S	■	I	V	E	S
I	N	F	E	R	A	B	L	E	■	E	R	E	C	T
E	N	I	D	■	L	O	U	S	■	R	E	N	T	S
S	A	X	■	S	L	O	E	■	R	O	E	■	■	■
T	E	E	■	P	E	T	■	B	E	D	■	E	H	A
■	■	■	S	A	D	■	C	A	P	E	■	T	E	L
R	I	P	E	R	■	C	O	I	L	■	B	E	L	L
O	M	E	N	S	■	A	N	N	A	M	A	R	I	A
U	P	O	N	■	M	R	T	■	C	A	R	N	E	Y
S	U	R	E	F	I	R	E	■	E	N	D	I	V	E
T	R	I	T	O	N	E	S	■	R	I	O	T	E	R
S	E	A	T	B	E	L	T	■	S	A	T	Y	R	S

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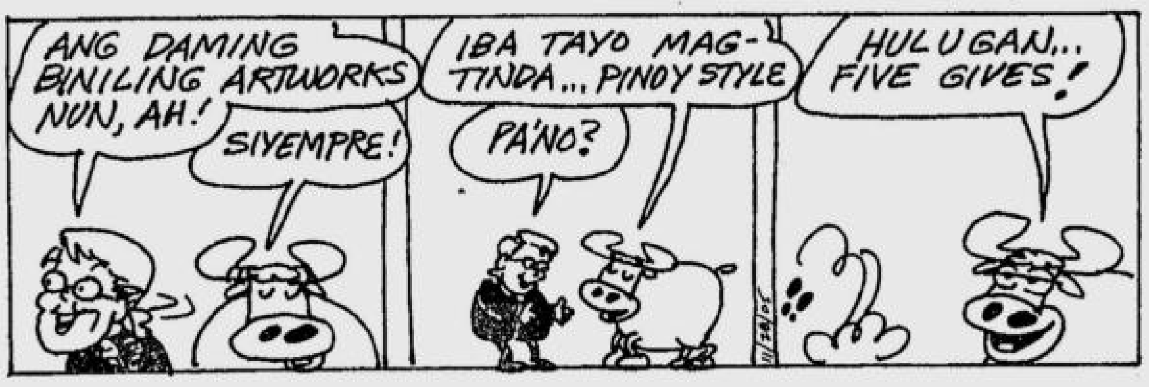
11/26/05

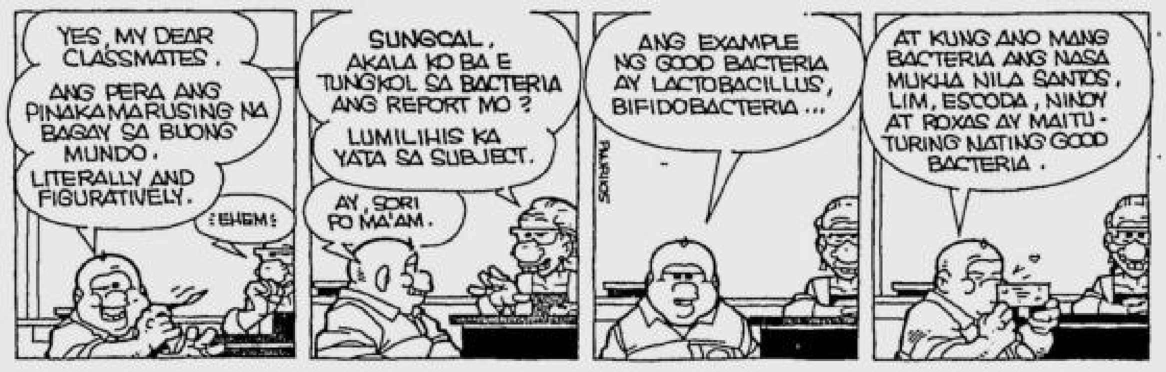
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANG DAMING BINILING ARTWORKS NUN, AH!
SIYEMPRE!
IBA TAYO MAG-TINDA... PINOY STYLE
PA'NO?
HULUGAN... FIVE GIVES!
11/28/05

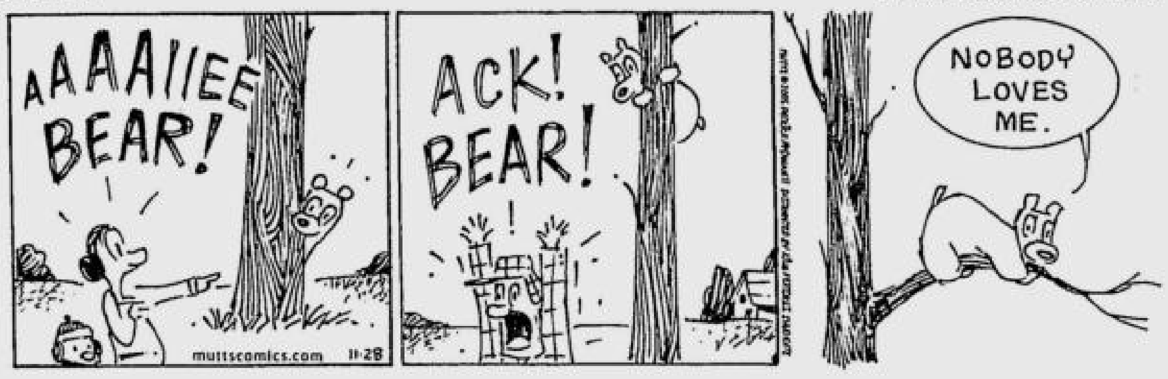
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


YES, MY DEAR CLASSMATES.
ANG PERA ANG PINAKAMARUSING NA BAGAY SA BUONG MUNDO.
LITERALLY AND FIGURATIVELY.
EHEM!
SUNGCAL, AKALA KO BA E TUNGKOL SA BACTERIA ANG REPORT MO?
LUMILIHIS KA YATA SA SUBJECT.
AY, SORI PO MA'AM.
ANG EXAMPLE NG GOOD BACTERIA AY LACTOBACILLUS, BIFIDOBACTERIA...
AT KUNG ANO MANG BACTERIA ANG NASA MUKHA NILA SANTOS, LIM, ESCODA, NINOY AT ROXAS AY MAITUTURING NATING GOOD BACTERIA.

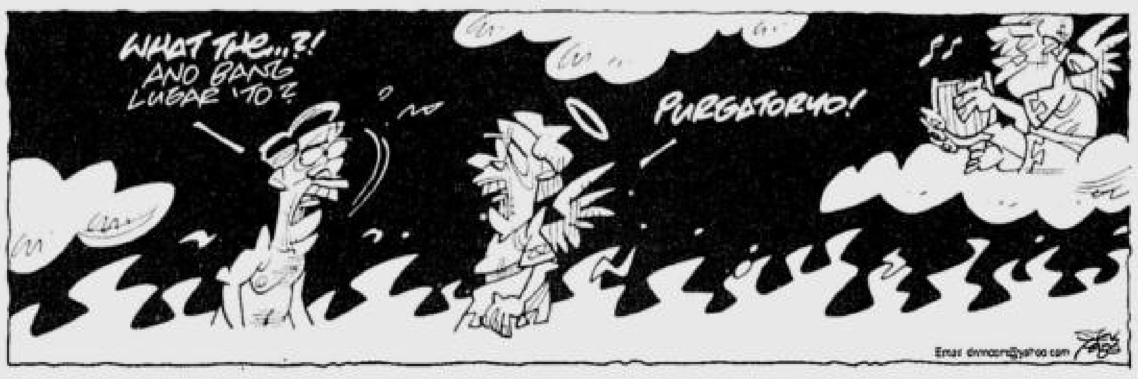
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


AAAAIIEE BEAR!
ACK! BEAR!
NOBODY LOVES ME.
muttscomics.com
11-28

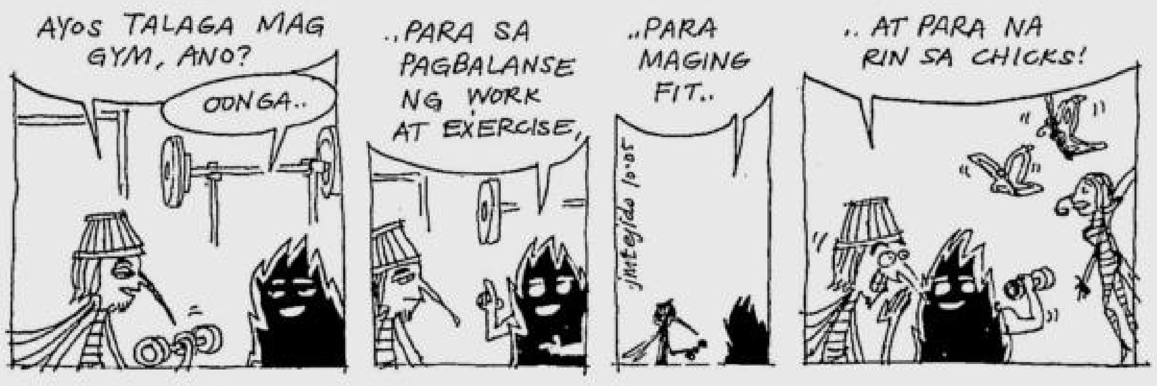
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


WHAT THE...?! ANO BANG LUGAR 'TO?
PURGATORYO!

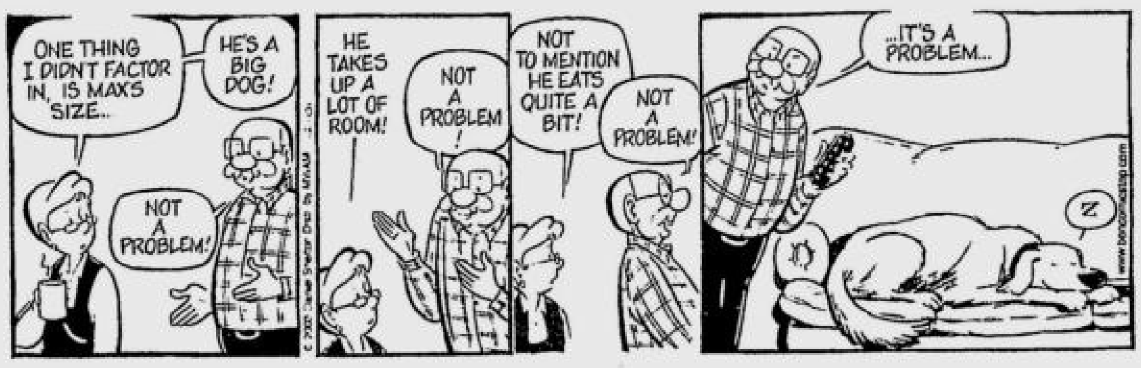
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


AYOS TALAGA MAG GYM, ANO?
OONGA..
..PARA SA PAGBALANSE NG WORK AT EXERCISE,
..PARA MAGING FIT..
.. AT PARA NA RIN SA CHICKS!

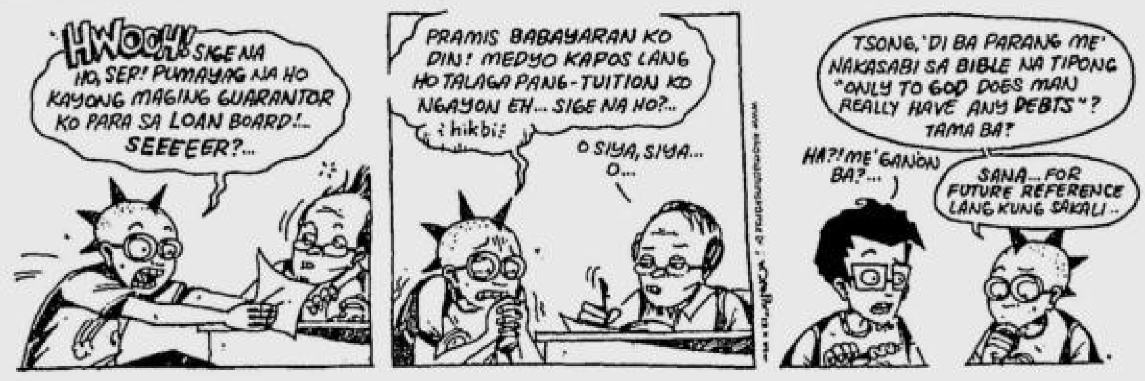
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


ONE THING I DIDN'T FACTOR IN, IS MAX'S SIZE..
HE'S A BIG DOG!
NOT A PROBLEM!
HE TAKES UP A LOT OF ROOM!
NOT A PROBLEM!
NOT TO MENTION HE EATS QUITE A BIT!
NOT A PROBLEM!
...IT'S A PROBLEM...
Z

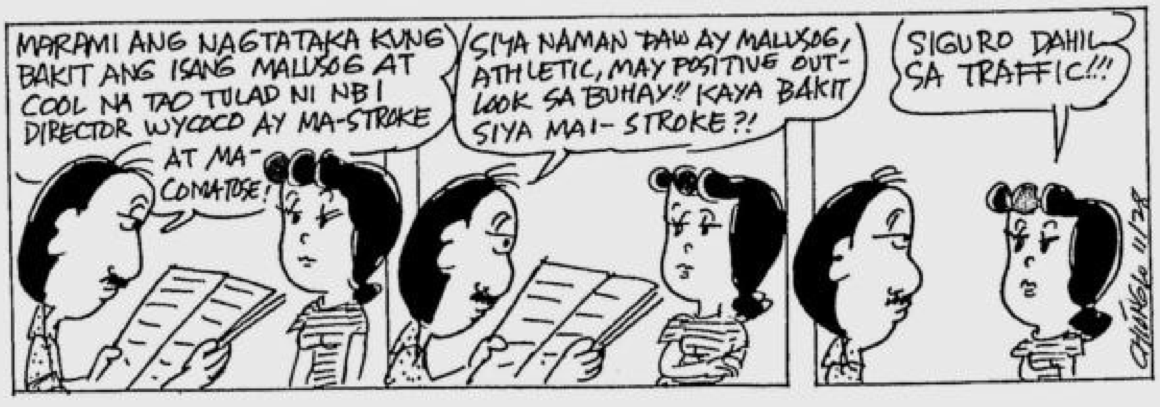
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


HWOOH!! SIGE NA HO, SER! PUMAYAG NA HO KAYONG MAGING GUARANTOR KO PARA SA LOAN BOARD!.. SEEEEER?...
PRAMIS BABAYARAN KO DIN! MEDYO KAPOS LANG HO TALAGA PANG-TUITION KO NGAYON EH... SIGE NA HO?..
¡ hikbi !
O SIYA, SIYA... O...
TSONG, 'DI BA PARANG ME' NAKASABI SA BIBLE NA TIPONG "ONLY TO GOD DOES MAN REALLY HAVE ANY DEBTS"? TAMA BA?
HA?! ME' GANON BA?...
SANA... FOR FUTURE REFERENCE LANG KUNG SAKALI..

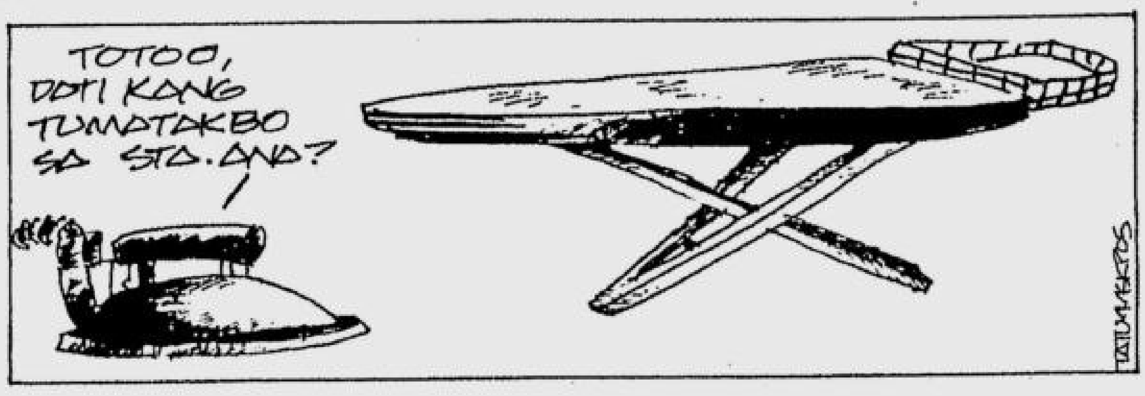
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MARAMI ANG NAGTATAKA KUNG BAKIT ANG ISANG MALUSOG AT COOL NA TAO TULAD NI NBI DIRECTOR WYCOCO AY MA-STROKE
AT MA-COMATOSE!
SIYA NAMAN DAW AY MALUSOG, ATHLETIC, MAY POSITIVE OUTLOOK SA BUHAY!! KAYA BAKIT SIYA MAI-STROKE?!
SIGURO DAHIL SA TRAFFIC!!!
CHIONGLO 11/28

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


TOTOO, DATI KANG TUMATAKBO SA STO. ANO?

An actor's first kiss

From page D1

"First time *ko mahalikan ng* guy," says Valentin, so his reaction in the scene was all natural—the sudden jerking back, the blushing, the uncomfortable silence. Which made Maximo's silent smile and exuberant cartwheel afterwards all the more rewarding and funny.

SCARFACE. A scar Valentin sustained in a childhood accident becomes a mark of vulnerability in the movie.

Before his appealing turn as a gentle cop who becomes the object of a boy's affection in "Maximo," Valentin's only experience in front of the camera was playing Francine Prieto's bland yuppie boyfriend in Jeffrey Jeturian's hit film, "Bridal Shower." But that movie introduced him not as JR Valentin, but as Juancho Valentino. For purposes of the sexy movie and the outfit that produced it (Seiko Films), Juancho Valentino was deemed more hunky-sounding than Valentin's real name.

It was Aureous Solito, "Bridal Shower's" acting coach and eventual "Maximo" director, who recommended Valentin to the producers of "Maximo" during pre-production for the digital film.

"Aureous said JR was the most talented newcomer in the pool of actors he coached for 'Bridal Shower,'" says Raymond Lee, producer and co-writer (with Michiko Yamamoto) of "Maximo." "At first, because his character was too bland in that movie, *parang ayaw namin*. But when we asked him to audition, we saw that he would fit the part of a gentle giant to Maximo. Plus, if you see JR, may sense of mystery *siya*, may vulnerability pa din even if he's playing a cop."

Valentin, 23 years old, 6'3 and a veteran of the modeling world (he was only 17 when he won the Mr. SM Supermall title in Cebu, and then the Mr. Bodyshots plum in 2000), is no one's idea of a rookie policeman. But his fine *mestizo-chinito* features and well-built physique serves him well in the role. Maximo's object of first love becomes, for all purposes, an idealized figure, contrasting more forcefully with the squalor and corruption of the slums where Maximo's family lives and where the rookie cop gets assigned.

Comfortable family

Playing a policeman was quite hard for the Cebu-bred model who came from a fairly comfortable family, but Valentin took pointers from his friends in the police force. "*Pinag-aralan ko kung paano sila gumalaw at magdala ng* uniform," he says.

For a particularly violent scene in the movie that required a close-up of Valentin's face looking shocked, he was helped along by a painful event: the death of his grandfather at 78, right on the day the scene was shot.

"*Wala ako sa sarili ko nun*," Valentin recalls. "*Nabablangko ako, parang* zombie, *kaya naka*-take 5 *kami*." Valentin grew up with his grandparents, so his *lolo*'s death, although preceded by hospital confinement, was still a shock.

But, as Lee tells it, when they reviewed the rushes, "JR's reactions were what we needed." The haunted, searching look made it to the final print.

An identifying scar on Valentin's cheek, ordinarily a debit in any model's resume, also serves a useful purpose in the movie. In one scene, Maximo impulsively caresses the scar and asks the blanching policeman, Victor, where he got it.

"We used it as a mark of vulnerability," Lee explains. This cop is no superhuman figure. He is flawed and plagued by personal demons like everyone else. For Valentin, it was a blessing that the scar he sustained in a childhood incident became an unexpected but important element in "Maximo."

Improved acting

The film has already reaped a clutch of awards, including Special Jury Prize and a citation for Lopez's acting at the first Cinemalaya Film Festival, and the Golden Zenith Award (Best First Digital Feature) at the 29th Montreal World Film Festival and Best Picture at the ImagineNATIVE Media Arts Festival, also in Canada.

The success of "Maximo" gratifies the newbie actor no end. "*Nakaka*-relieve *na maganda lumabas*," he says. "My ate and some friends have watched it, and *natutuwa sila*, because *anlaki raw ng* improvement *ng* acting *ko* from 'Bridal Shower' to this movie."

Still, "Bridal Shower" may be the sexiest Valentin would go. After that movie, he received several offers, mostly for "bold" movies. "*Pero ayoko talaga mag*-bold. *Baka madamay lang ang* family *ko*, who are all very conservative."

He doesn't need to. With "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros," Valentin shows he's a new face and promising presence to watch in local movies.

"Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros" opens Nov. 30 nationwide. It is released through Star Cinema.

WITH Nathan Lopez, who plays Maximo

PHOTOS BY JOVEL LORENZO COURTESY OF STARSTUDIO MAGAZINE

To Sundance

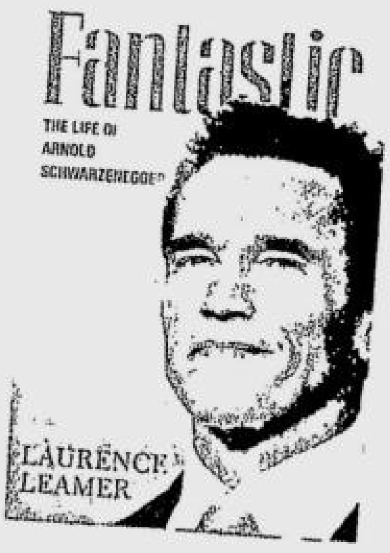
"ANG PAGDADALAGA NI MAXimo Oliveros" has been invited to the 2006 Sundance Film Festival 2006, the producers said.

The movie, produced by independent film company Ufo Pictures, is the first Filipino feature film to be invited to the festival, considered the biggest and most influential festival of independent cinema in the world.

Ufo Pictures' Raymond Lee, the producer, and Auraeus Solito, the director, said they received a letter last Nov. 24 from John Cooper, Sundance's director for programming, expressing Sundance's "great pleasure" to invite the movie to play in the World Cinema Competition in January in Salt Lake City, Utah.

"We are delighted to present the US premiere of this excellent work," the letter said.

"FANTASTIC: The Life of Arnold Schwarzenegger" is a biography of one of the most extraordinary success stories of our time. An immigrant with a heavy accent from a village in Austria, Schwarzenegger became the greatest bodybuilder in history, the No. 1 movie star in the world, the Republican husband of a Kennedy princess, and the governor of the greatest of American states. It is written by Laurence Leamer, author of the New York Times bestsellers "The Kennedy Women" and "The Kennedy Men," and one of America's prominent biographers. The book is available at National Book Store.



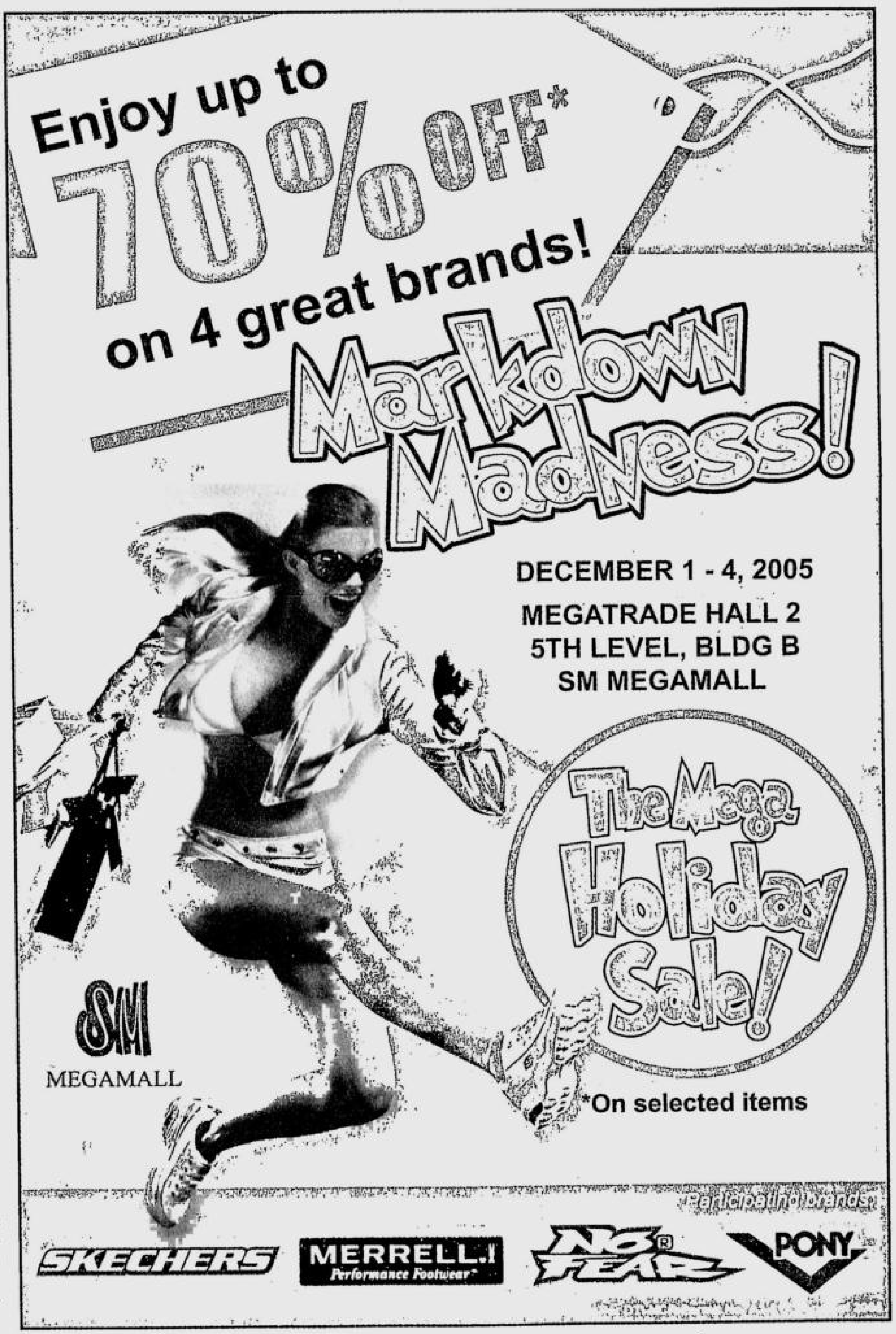
Call for audition

THEATRENOW, THE LABORATORY ARM OF Gantimpala Theater Foundation (GTF), is holding an audition for a male actor on Dec. 2, 4-7 p.m., at 2/F Open-Air Auditorium Building, Luneta, Manila.

The actor will play the lead role of Simoun in a Filipino play based on historical events. Those who are interested to audition must be between 27-35 years old, at least 5'5" tall, with a pleasing personality, good physique and fluent in Filipino.

He must bring a resume and two colored pictures (whole body and close-up shot). He must be ready to deliver a monologue in Filipino and will be asked to read excerpts from the play.

Call 5280603 or 5365860 and look for Alwin Ignacio.



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French entry to 2006 Oscars opens this week in Manila

BENNO Furmann and Diane Kruger

AN EMOTIONAL FILM BASED ON A TRUE story about a Christmas truce that brought German, French and British soldiers out of their World War I trenches, Sony Pictures Classics' "Merry Christmas" (Joyeux Noel) has been officially selected as France's entry to the Best Foreign Language Film category at the Oscar Awards next year.

The film is scheduled to make its Asian premiere in Manila on Nov. 30, ahead of its February 2006 opening in the US.

Directed by France's Christian Carion and starring Diane Kruger ("Troy"), "Merry Christmas" takes a little-known story of a 1914 fraternization of enemies which makes the movie an ode to peace.

Cheered at its gala screening at the Cannes Film Festival last May, the film is also a powerful illustration of Europe's revitalized and increasingly confident film industry—with a story that would make Hollywood proud.

"It carries a simple message of peace and humanity," says Carion, who brought together top actors from Germany, France and Britain for the film. "I've been fascinated by the story and working on it for the last 10 years."

The film that uses all three languages, with respective subtitles, and English as the common link when the characters speak to each other.

"I was moved that enemies would stop fighting and shake hands in the middle of a war," says Carion. "It is incredible. I wanted to pay tribute to those soldiers brave enough to do it. They're heroes. They were part of something extraordinary."

A best-selling book in Germany titled "The Little Peace in the Big War" helped historians piece together the unique, if sadly ephemeral, end to fighting in northern France in 1914. Author Michael Juergs says: "If there had been live television at the time and people had seen pictures of this truce, it would have been the end of the war."

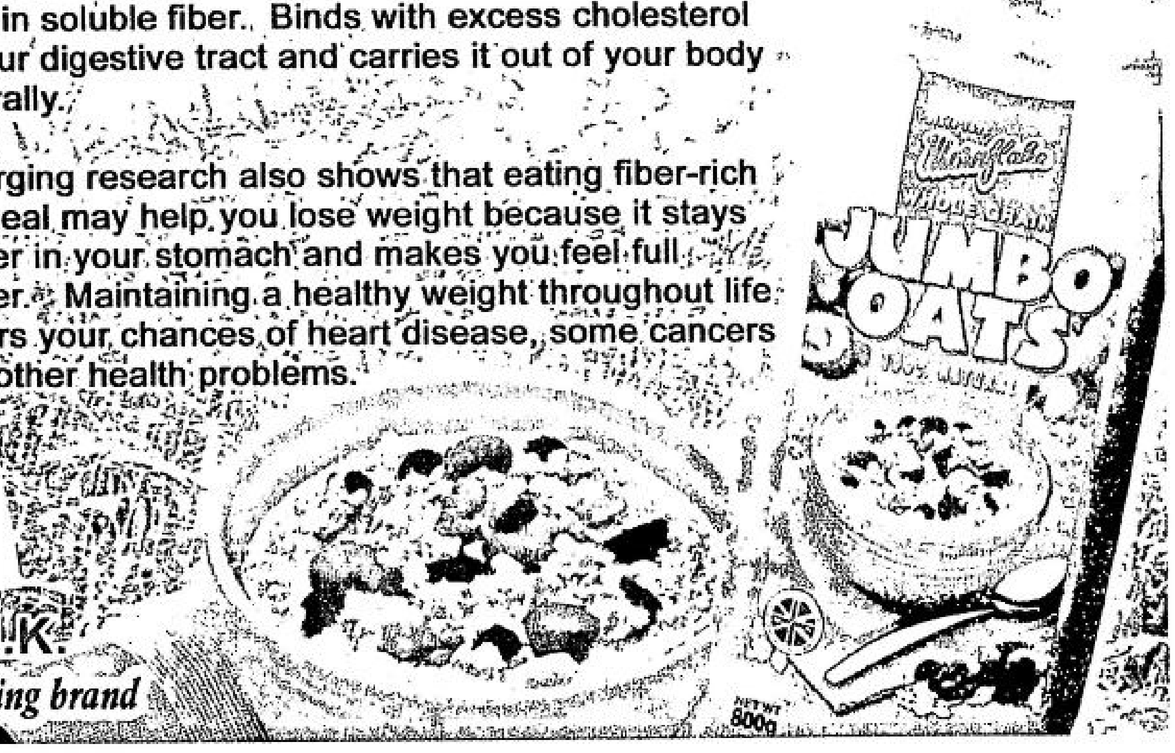
At that point, four months into the Great War an estimated 100,000 soldiers from both sides emerged from trenches and spent about three days mingling in a frozen no-man's land.

It's uncertain how it began, but many accounts—and Carion's film—trace the start to the Germans singing "Silent Night" in their trenches adorned with candle-lit trees on Christmas Eve. In the film, that was followed by applause and a bagpipe encore from a trench with Scottish soldiers nearby.

Soldiers from the two sides emerged from their trenches after Germans shouted: "We not shoot, you not shoot." The warring sides then shook hands.

On Christmas Day, the truce spread. In the film, they traded food, chocolate, cigarettes and wine—as well as stories and pictures of their wives and families. They also played soccer... before resuming hostilities.

In her review of the film, Lissa Nesselson of Variety writes: "The message is powerful with storytelling to match. Even cynics, who might find the idea of enemies celebrating Christmas together a bit too tidy a theme, should be impressed by where this proudly old-fashioned film is headed: A final reel with multiple resonances for the current world."



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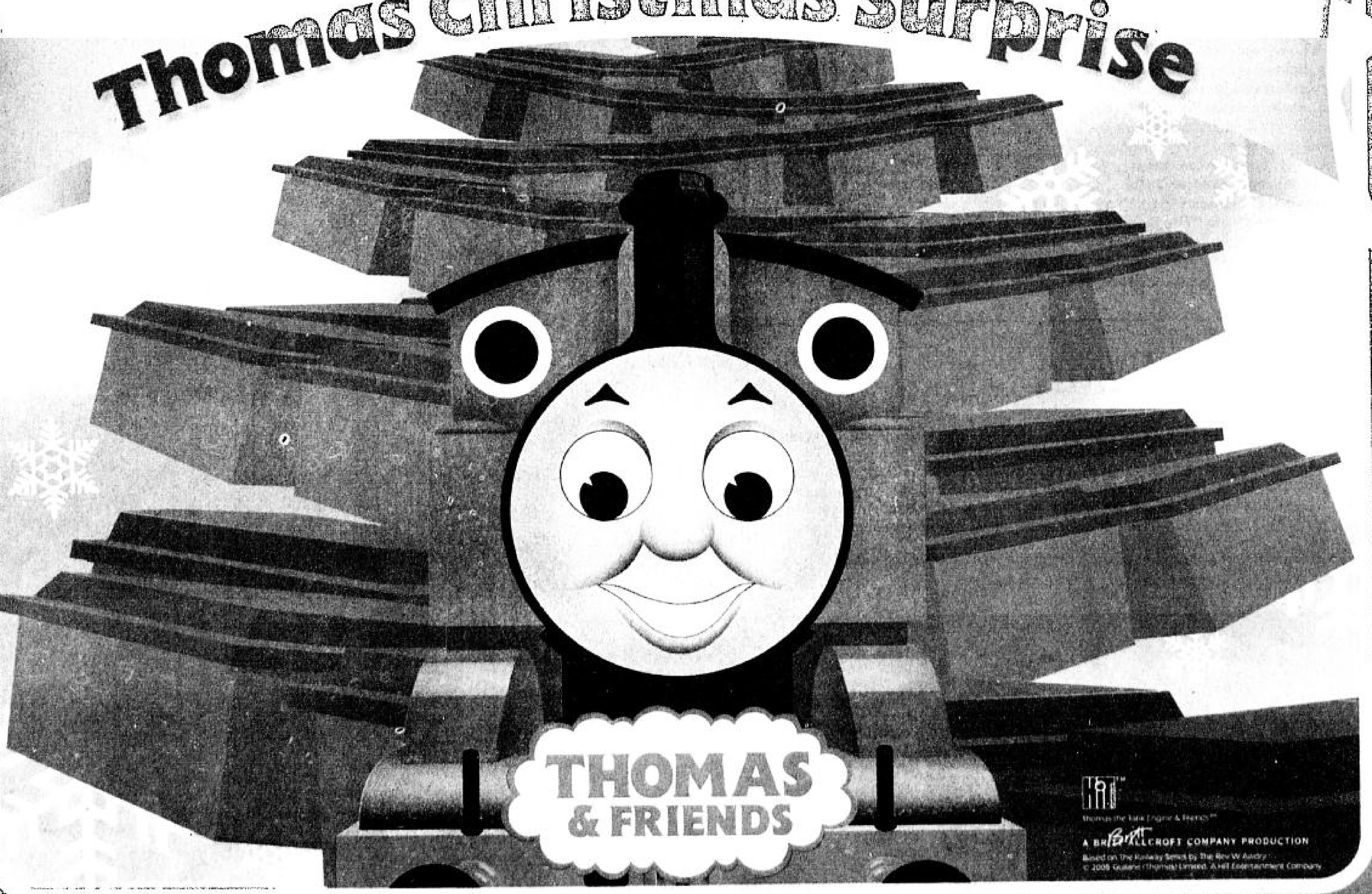
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400 YEARS OF 'DON QUIXOTE'

'La Mancha' is the year's best musical

Repertory Philippines makes a blazing return to form with a tribute to the quixotic Zeneida Amador

SHE dreamed the impossible dream and founded Repertory Philippines.

By Gibbs Cadiz

AHH, to dream the impossible dream and write the unwritable wrong, er, review...

You could say being snarky is the only response hip enough for any theater observer worth his jaded, postmodern salt when confronted with the Broadway musical "Man of La Mancha." And it has to do with three words: "The Impossible Dream."

Yes, the song that occupies pride of place in the same pantheon of vein-popping sentimental pablum as "My Way," "Go the Distance" and "This Is the Moment," having paved the way for them.

Once upon a time, Richard Kiley's mighty baritone stormed the heavens, or more properly the skylight and rafters of the Anta Washington Square Theater in 1965, New York, with an anthem about fighting unbeatable foes and bearing unbearable sorrows, and everything—from Broadway to Las Vegas, from concert hall to videoke—has not been the same since.

To mount "Man of La Mancha" today is to ask the question: How do you perform CPR on a cliché and make it live again?

Blazing mix

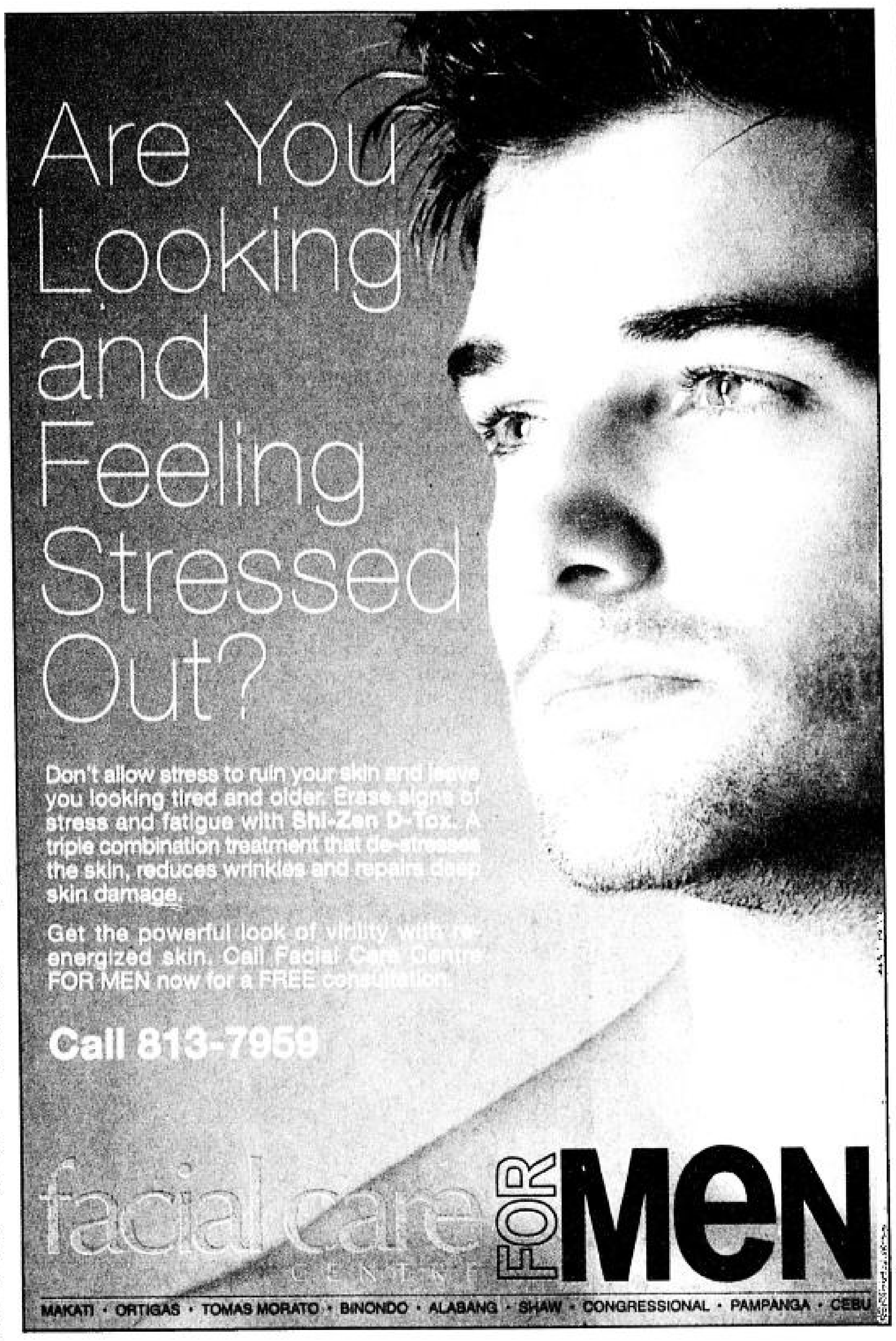
Repertory Philippines, bless its rejuvenated soul, has the answer. In a welcome return to form after the back-to-back disappointments of "Fame" and "Little Shop of Horrors," Rep mounts Mitch Leigh and Joe Darion's musical take on the Cervantes classic with a blazing mix of conviction, sincerity and show-stopping pizzazz.

Under such ministrations, "Man of La Mancha" becomes, hands down, the best-staged musical in local theater this year.

It's easy to locate the heart that makes this show a model of dignity and polish. "La Mancha," directed by Baby Barredo and running in Greenbelt 1's Onstage Theater until Dec. 18, is the company's tribute to the late Zeneida "Bibot" Amador, Rep's founder and resident windmill-tilter for much of its 38 years.

Amador loved the play and the novel to bits, and requested its staging just before her death last year. (This year also marks the 400th anniversary of the publication of "Don Quixote de la Mancha.")

"LA MANCHA"/E2



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The great Kawabata

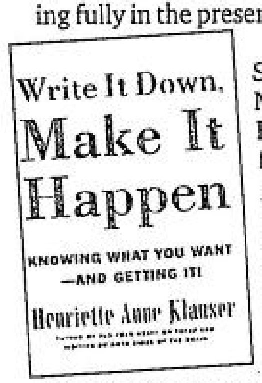
"FOR HIS NARRATIVE MASTERY, which, with great sensibility, expresses the essence of the Japanese mind," Yasunari Kawabata won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1968 and became the first Japanese and third Asian (after Rabindranath Tagore and Shmuel Yosef Agnon) to win the award.

His spare, lyrical and subtly shaded prose captured the imagination of an international audience and has remained widely read until today. Kawabata is PowerBooks' author of the month.

"Snow Country," started in 1934 and first published in installments from 1935 through 1937, is the stark tale of a love affair between a Tokyo dilettante and a provincial geisha, which takes place in a remote hot-spring town somewhere on the west of the Japanese Alps. It established Kawabata as one of Japan's foremost authors and became an instant classic, described by Edward G. Seidensticker as "perhaps Kawabata's masterpiece."

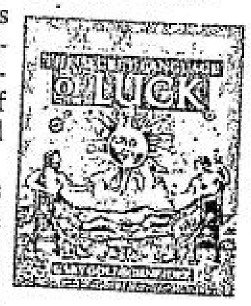
Self-help reads

IN "THE POWER OF NOW," ECKHART Tolle shows readers how to recognize themselves as creators of their pain, and how to have a pain-free existence by living fully in the present.


Write It Down, Make It Happen
KNOWING WHAT YOU WANT —AND GETTING IT!
Henriette Anne Klauser

Dr. David Joseph Schwartz's "The Magic of Thinking Big" presents a carefully designed program for getting the most out of your job, marriage, family life and community.

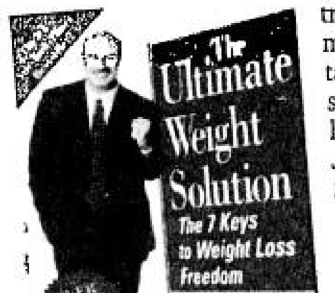
Read stories from ordinary people who have witnessed miracles large and small unfold in their lives after putting their goals on paper in Henriette Ann Klauser's "Write It Down, Make It Happen."



Dr. Phil McGraw's "Ultimate Weight Loss Solution" talks about making the ultimate choice to finally take control of your weight and your life.

Anthea Paul's "Girlosopy: The Breakup Survival Kit" offers comfort and practical advice to guide young women through the end of a relationship.

In "The Secret Language of Luck," Gary Goldschneider talks about how to promote good luck in all areas of life through the year 2021 based on his unique and internationally recognized system that tracks the two most important planets for success in daily life—Jupiter and Saturn.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The books are available at PowerBooks Specialty Store, which has branches at Greenbelt 4 (tel. 7576428 to 29), Megamall (6352898 to 99), Alabang Town Center (8505662 to 63), Glorietta (7527075), Shangri-La (6380023/25) and Robinsons Place Ermita (5233334/ 5243448).

Standing ovation for Toyota Classics

By Antonio C. Hila

MANILA'S MUSIC-LOVERS GAVE Toyota Classics' 16th-anniversary presentation, a musical journey featuring the Budapest Operetta Theater, a standing ovation.

The journey was done through best-loved songs from operettas and Broadway musicals from Hungary, Austria and the United States, prefaced with rousing symphonic music in the form of overtures and dances.

The reception it got clearly indicated the local audience's preference for the song-and-dance type of shows that gave aural and visual delight.

Taking center stage was the 70-member-strong Budapest Operetta Theater Orchestra conducted by Istvan Sillo, which had received critical acclaim in Europe. Sopranos Zsuzsa Kalocsai and Monika Fischl and tenors Zoltan Nyari and Daniel Vadasz took turns interpreting songs by Lehar, Strauss and Kalman.

Featured local talent was soprano Alegria O. Ferrer, who rendered Broadway songs composed by Bernstein and Loewe.

Two pairs of dancers in colorful costumes complemented the singing, going in and out of the stage. They were Marta Laura Ottlik, Renata Darnor, Istvan Robert Kiss and Aron Schmidt.

The singers spiced up their singing with appropriate choreographic movements that elicited warm applause. One singer, Fischl, was applauded stoutly when she came down the stage, and went up and down the left and right aisles while singing the familiar "Voices of Spring," a formidable Strauss work.

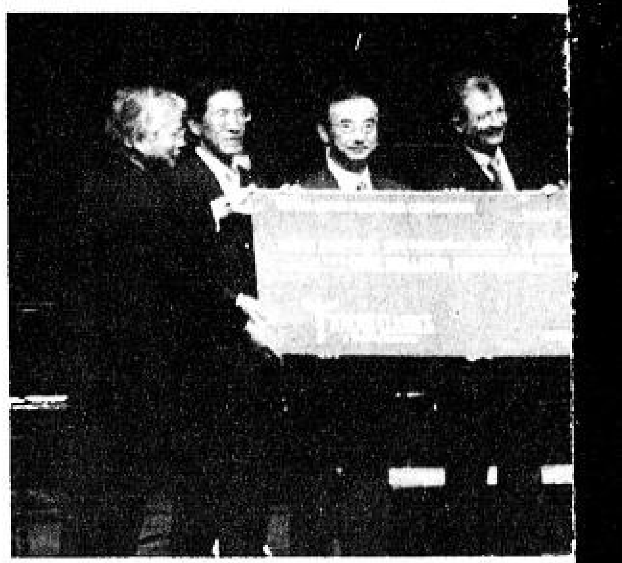
Ferrer, who rehearsed with the orchestra just a few hours before curtain time, rendered her songs—"Tonight" from "West Side Story," in a duet with tenor Daniel Vadasz; and the solo "I Could Have Danced All Night" from "My Fair Lady"—with austere movements.

The other tenor, Zoltan Nyari, impressed the audience with his absorbing rendition of "Maria" from the Bernstein opus "West Side Story."

At the reprise, the dancers appeared and the conductor stepped out from the podium and asked Ferrer to dance with him. Holding his bouquet in one hand, Ferrer managed a few steps with him.

At intermission, Toyota Motor Philippines (TMP) Corporation officials—Nobaru Tabata, president; Alfred Ty, vice chair; Iwao Nihashu, president, managing officer of Toyota Motor

BUDAPEST Operetta Theatre with sopranos Zsuzsa Kalocsai and Monika Fischl and tenors Zoltan Nyari and Daniel Vadasz



TOYOTA Motor Philippines Corporation donates P1 million to Pulong Sta. Cruz Elementary School in Laguna.

'La Mancha' is the year's best mu

Of the film "The Color Purple" in 1985, Roger Ebert wrote: "There is not a scene that does not shine with the love of the people who made it." That unimprovable phrase sums up how the actors of "La Mancha"—a virtual constellation of local musical talent, all making the pilgrimage back to Rep to pay homage to their mentor—succeed in sparking new life in a problematic, dated work.

NICCOLO Manahan, Cathy Azanza, Joy Virata and Cocoy Laurel in Rep's "Man of La Mancha"

Sugar-coating

Those problems lie not so much with Cervantes and his immortal knight-errant, as with how the musical, as most musicals do, ends up sugar-coating the madness and circumstances of Don Quixote.

"La Mancha" constructs a play-within-a-play that wraps Quixote's feverish ravings in schmaltz. The syrupy result (see Aldonza singing to a neighing Rocinante!) then functions as a soapbox for Leigh, Darion and writer Dale Wasserman's wooly visions of a romantic, fuzzy utopianism as an antidote to a world gone, well, mad.

Wasserman, who also wrote the Off-Broadway smash "One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest," obviously had a thing for crack-brained heroes as repositories of some ancient, esoteric way to happiness that us plain sane mortals could only wish for.

"La Mancha's" most-quoted line spells this out knowingly: "When life itself seems lunatic, who knows where madness lies? Too much sanity may be madness." But damn if figuring out what that means isn't like reaching for the unreachable star itself.

Non-condescending

Rep swerves around this sickly-sweet fly-trap by sticking to a tried-and-tested tool in theater: honesty.

Its "Man of La Mancha" is remarkably free of condescension, either toward sentimental theatergoers who live for the lump in their throats as the first strains of "The Impossible Dream" float by, or toward those who consider themselves cynical enough to get misty-eyed over the ululations of an aging nobleman in the grips of what is now called Alzheimer's.

When, in the middle of the show, Michael Williams' Don Quixote finally plants himself near the footlights and begins to warble the musical's centerpiece song, one can't be chided for holding one's breath far longer than usual.

How will Williams scrape away several decades' worth of powder, perfume, pomade and alcohol from that enduring concert ditty? Astoundingly, he does, by singing it not as an aria of sappy uplift, but as a straightforward if deeply felt declaration of one man's mission in life.

Little miracles

It's one instance among many of the little miracles that make this "La Mancha" such a gratifying surprise.
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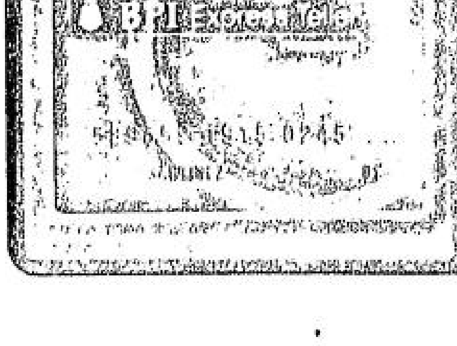
COCOY Laurel, Niccolo Manahan, Robbie Guevara, Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo, Michael Williams, Joy Virata, Miguel F and Cathy Azanza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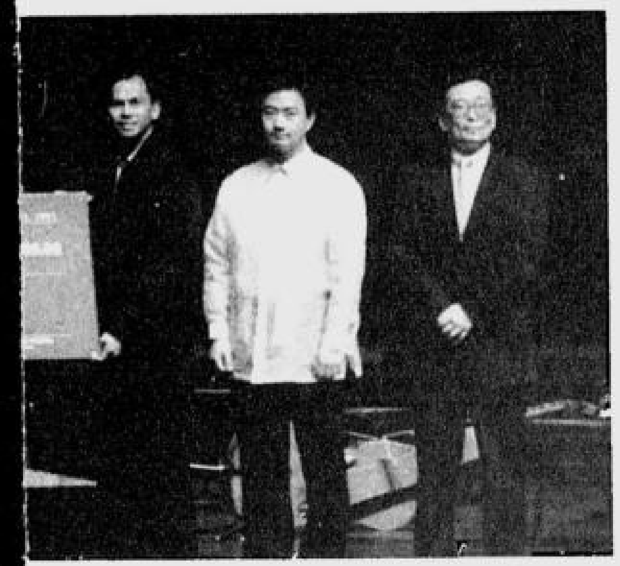
Corporation; and David Go, president of Toyota Motor Philippines Foundation (TMPF)—gave a check for P1 million, the proceeds of the concert, to José B. Catindig Jr., mayor of Sta. Rosa City, Laguna.

Witnessing were Ambassadors Ryuichiro Yamakazi and Gyorgy Busztin of Japan and Hungary.

The donation will be used for the construction of six classrooms for Pulong Sta. Cruz Elementary School in Sta. Rosa, a joint project of the TMP and the city government, through the TMPF, Toyota's corporate social arm.

The foundation adopted the school as a participant in the national government's Adopt-a-School program. Since 2002, the TMPF, through Toyota Classics, has donated the full amount from ticket sales to humanitarian organizations.



THE WALES Choral Festival in 1995 proclaimed the UST Singers as the "Choir of the World."

UST Singers serenade at the Polo Club

THE SUNICO FOUNDATION FOR Arts and Technology (SFAT) and the Foundation for the Musical Filipino (FMF) will present the UST Singers under the direction of Fidel Calalang Jr. in a cocktail-concert on Nov. 29 at the Manila Polo Club on McKinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City. Cocktails start at 6 p.m. while the concert begins at 7:30.

"Serenade for the Arts" features a combination of classical, international, Filipino and Broadway repertoire, including some of the UST Singers' prize-winning songs as well as especially arranged choral works.

Among the numbers are "Dona Ubensa" by Cangiano, "The Lord's Prayer" by Malotte, "The Prayer" by Foster, "We Beheld Once Again the Stars" by Stroope, "Aquesta Me Guiaba" by Cayabyab, "Cloudburst" by Whitacre; international songs, such as "Rumbamban," "Shenandoah," "Syncopated Clock," "Pink Plank Plunk!," "Old-Time Religion," and "When the Saints Go Marching in"; Filipiniana suite of light-hearted love songs arranged by Fidel Calalang; and Broadway numbers from "Ragtime," "Wicked," "West Side Story," "South Pacific," "Lés Miserables," "Oklahoma," "Nine," and "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," all arranged by Calalang.

Founded in 1992, the UST Singers have become the most-awarded Filipino choir in the last decade.

It was proclaimed Choir of the World in the 1995 Wales Choral Festival. It won the grand prize at the 27th Florilege Vocal de Tours in France; Gran Premio "Citta di Gorizia," 37th Concorso Internazionale di Canto Corale in Italy; World Choral Festival in Mexico; Mundi Cantat Festa Musicale in the Czech Republic; and the Tonen 2002 in the Netherlands.

In its 10th World Concert Tour last year, it was awarded the Excellence *avec* Distinction and the Ville de Vevey Jury Prize in Montreux, Switzerland; and Best Choir Award at the 2004 World Choral Festival in Puebla, Mexico.

Also last year, Mayor Jeremy Harris of Honolulu declared Aug. 20 as UST Singers Day in Hawaii.

For its 11th International Concert Tour this year, the choir performed in Seoul, Utah, Chicago and Kansas City.

The UST Singers have recorded their choral renditions in Germany. Their CDs have been released in Europe.

For tickets, call the SFAT (7243950, 7275138), FMF (9230442, 9230662), UST Conservatory of Music (7314022, 7313101 loc. 8246).

Proceeds of the concert will go to the scholarship fund of the SFAT and the various cultural projects of the FMF.

"MARIAN Catechism: Questions and Answers on the Life, Person, and Role of Mary in the History of Salvation" is the most up-to-date Mariological guidebook to come in recent years. Written by Ma. Socorro L. Bautista, Ph.D., it is an informative survey, in catechism form, of the key questions and issues on the role of the Blessed Mother in redemption as well as the Catholic devotion to her cult that has endured through the centuries, reaffirmed and strengthened particularly in the pontificate of the late John Paul II, who added five more chaplets to the mysteries of the Rosary. The book is available at Inkwell Printing (6343355 to 57) and the Opus Dei Information Center (7778986).

Marian Catechism
Questions & Answers
on the Life, Person, and Role of Holy Mary
in the HISTORY OF SALVATION

sical

From page E1

Absent any mawkish or winking spirit, it prets story confidently, joyously, with the sort of y and aplomb one has come to expect from the ny that brought "Les Miserables" to Philippine , but which have eluded it of late.

iams' vividly tragicomic take on Alonzo Quion Quixote as well as Miguel de Cervantes velist is also part of the play, in a risky conceit kes some getting used to) is enthralling, each ter painstakingly defined.

is easily Williams' showiest role in years since ng the show cold as Javert in "Les Miz." Helped by the Manila Symphony Orchestra, his lusigh baritone plays a big part in the show's bur sound.

oiled

iams shares the stage with three generations Repertory progeny: Audie Gemora (alternat Quixote), Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo, Cocoy , Joy Virata, Miguel Faustmann, Raul Montevd Tinio, Niccolo Manahan, Cathy Azanza, Guevarra, Lorenz Martinez, Arnel Carrion, amora, Oliver Usison and more, plus two genamenco dancers in Clara Ramona and Emma a.

man (or woman), these actors form an adv well-oiled troupe. In the long, harrowing Bird, Little Bird" sequence, which sees Aldoning battered and raped (a number that calls to he frenetic ballet of Anita's ravishment in Side Story"), the simultaneous singing and graphed manhandling by the men, led by and Montesa, are superlative.

Among Rep's younger thespians, the actor to atch is Manahan, who, on the strength of his vocal instrument alone, deserves every break he gets in theater.

It is a voice that is "exactly what we expect to hear, and almost never do hear, in theater —a 'liveness' intensified, magnifying the 'natural' [with] its penetrating resonance," to quote Walter Kerr.

In song, but more so in speech (as in Rep's all-male "The Taming of the Shrew" a few months ago), Manahan's pipes are deep, symphonic, velvety, and to hear them rumbling onstage is to glimpse the enormous promise awaiting this young actor, if he plays his cards right.

ustmann

Sublime

This "La Mancha," though, notwithstanding Williams' virtuoso turn in the title role, wouldn't be what it is without Lauchengco-Yulo's Aldonza/Dulcinea.

Arriving at this role after nearly a lifetime spent in musical theater, Lauchengco-Yulo is nothing short of sublime—an achievement borne not only of skill but of a gracious, luminous maturity.

In her hands, "La Mancha" becomes as much Aldonza's story as Quixote's. Her moving transformation from disbelieving whore to passionate believer, singing in the end to a sickly Alonzo Quijana to rouse him from bed and urge him to take up knighthood again, becomes the audience's journey, too.

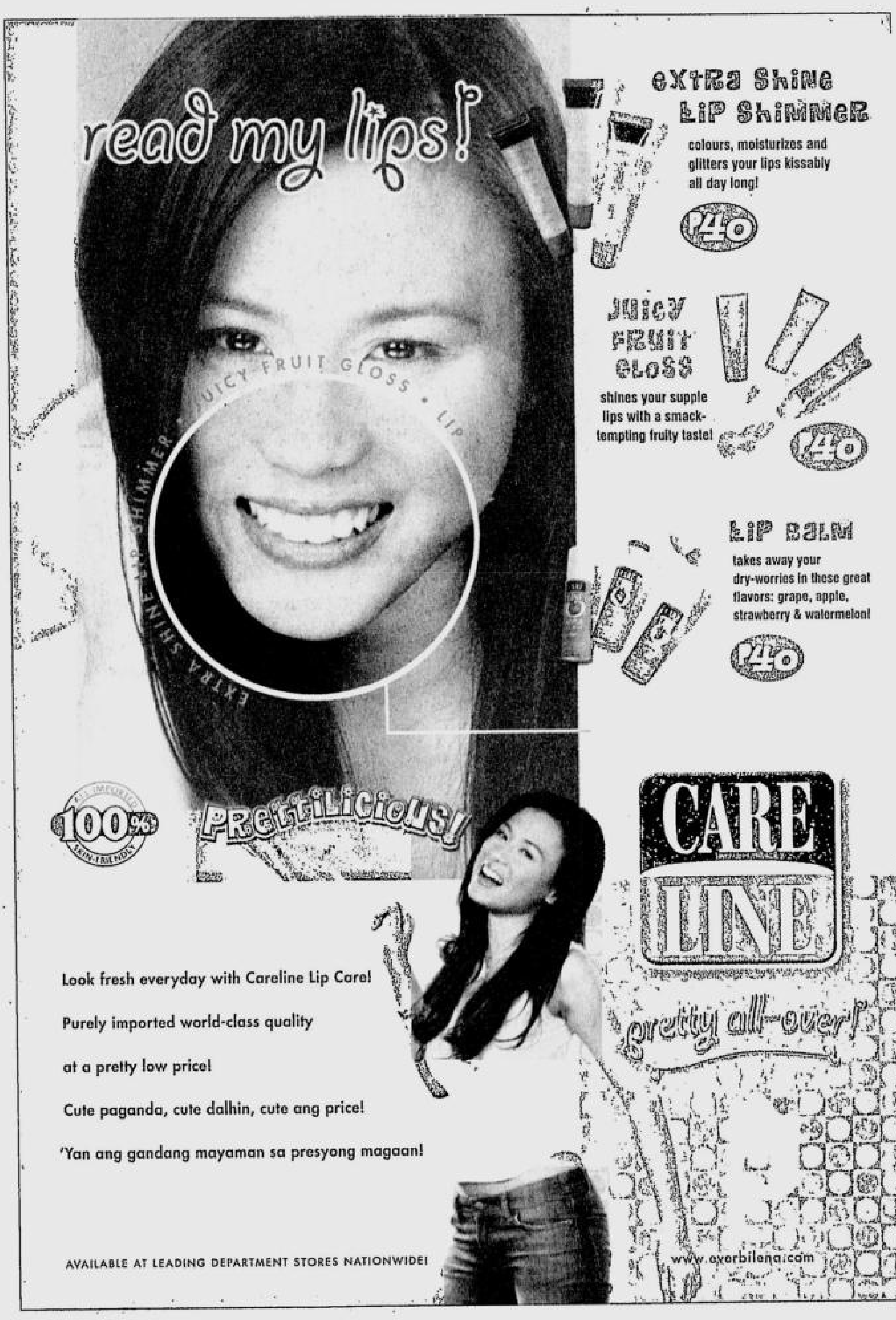
It is only when she buys into Quixote's fervid fantasies of a better life, when the wench Aldonza finally becomes the beautiful Dulcinea, that "Man of La Mancha" attains the full measure of its aspirations as a musical about the power of dreams.

With Lauchengco-Yulo anchoring the truth of this radiant "La Mancha," a demented knight's willingness to march into hell is made perfectly understandable. Her Dulcinea is the ultimate heavenly cause.

"Man of La Mancha" runs until Dec. 18. Call 8870710 or 8919999.

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph

MENCHU Lauchengco-Yulo (Aldonza/Dulcinea) and Michael Williams (Alonzo Quijano/Don Quixote)



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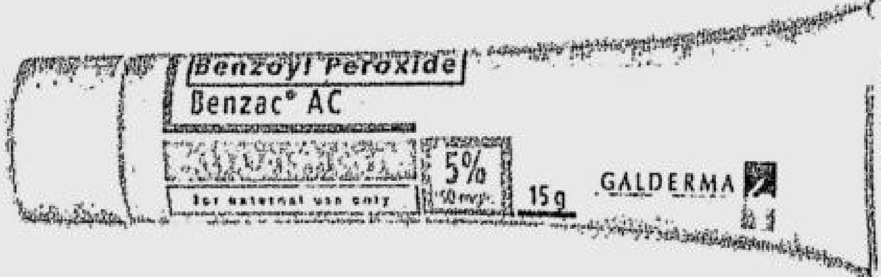

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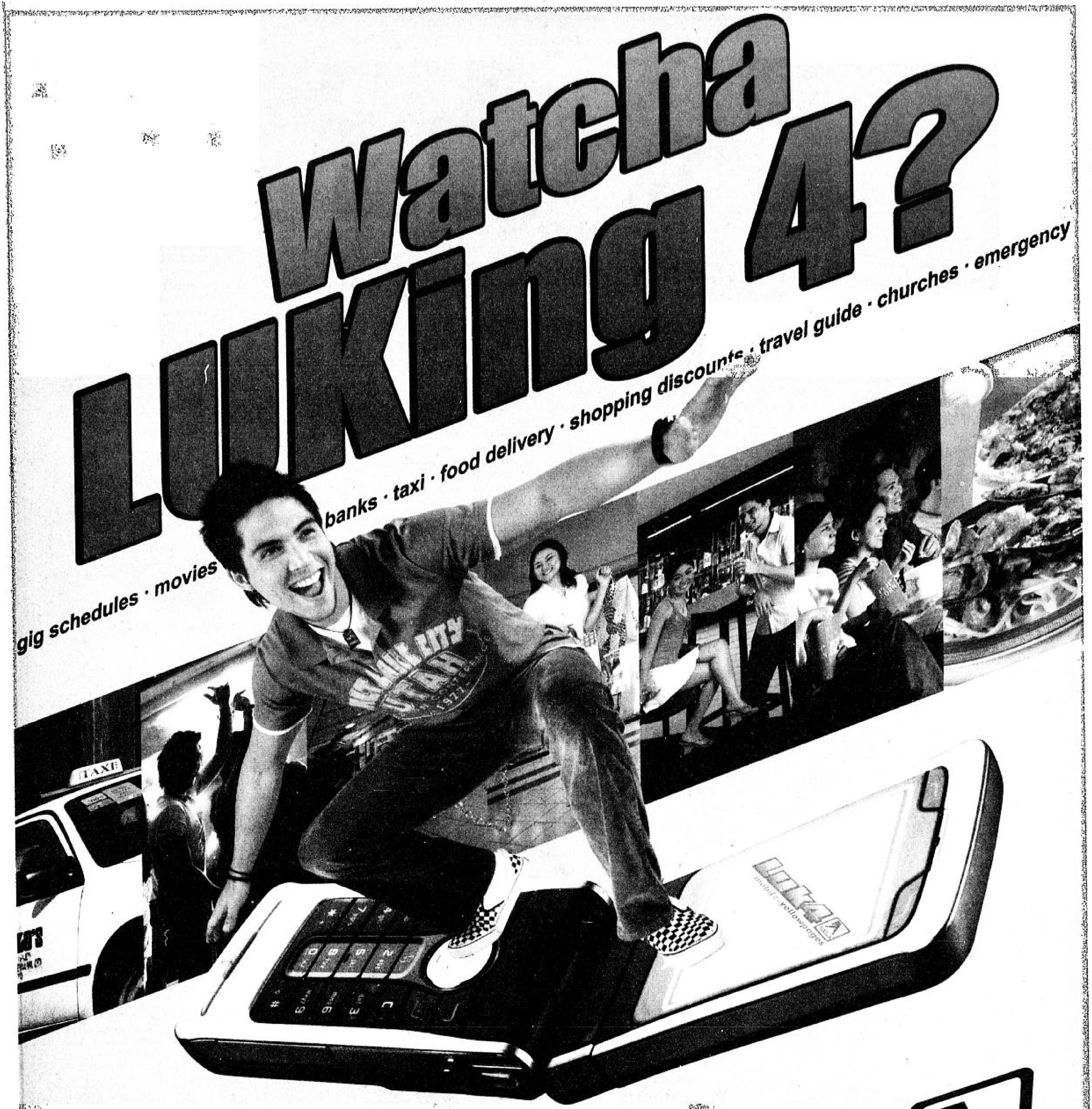
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